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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I LEARN, in my retired situation, with great regret, that the hallowing of the Lord's Day is considered, by increasing numbers, even of persons not unfavourable to the cause of religion, rather as a matter of expediency, than of moral obligation. I am deeply convinced, however, that such an opinion is very injurious to the cause of true godliness; both in respect of the individuals who entertain it, and of the circle, more or less extensive, to which their influence extends. I shall therefore arrange a few thoughts both on the original institution of the Sabbath—the Sabbath, I mean, as a part of the Mosaic dispensation—and on the obligation of the Christian Sabbath, or, more properly speaking, THE LORD'S DAY.

It is evident, even from the Fourth Commandment, that the Sabbath was instituted in commemoration of the creation. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it." (Exod. xx. 11.) Now, what reason can be assigned, why this intended commemoration should never be intimated to mankind, till above two thousand five hundred years after the creation? Had the rational creatures of God no cause or reason to remember that event, during these revolving ages? Had God no worshippers all this time? Were none under obligations to worship him? Would the Sabbath be less needful, useful, or expedient, in order to the worship of God, before the days of

Moses, than it was afterwards? Or why should that at length be given to a very small portion of the human race, in which, in respect of the reason assigned for its institution, all men are equally concerned?

It has long appeared to me, that any man, not having previously formed another system from books or reasoning, on reading the words of Moses, when he had finished his most sublime narrative of God's creating the world, must conclude, that the appointment of the Sabbath was directly made on that grand occasion: and this conclusion would be the same, whether he read the passage in the original Hebrew or in our translation. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; *because* that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." (Gen. ii. 1—3.) The institution concerns the whole human race, as much as the nation of Israel: and the reason for thus setting apart a continually returning season, as a memorial of the creation completed and rested in by the great Creator, seemed in some respects more cogent, before the entrance of sin had marred the beauty of the work, and interrupted his full acquiescence in it as "very good," than afterwards, when "it repented the Lord that he had made man, and it grieved him at his heart," (Gen. vi. 6.) and when man's rest

in God and his works had been by the Fall disturbed or destroyed.

But Dr. Paley, (a name in many respects justly entitled to high regard) maintains, that "we hear no more of the Sabbath, or of the seventh day, as in any other manner distinguished from the other six, until the history brings us down to the sojourning of the Jews\* in the Wilderness. It is unaccountable," he says, "that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and these extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the three first patriarchs, which in many parts of the account is sufficiently circumstantial and particular." It seems here conceded, that we could not reasonably expect to hear of the Sabbath, except among the worshippers of the true God, during the ages which elapsed between Adam and Moses: and doubtless they who renounced God, and became either atheists or idolaters, whether before or after the Deluge, would renounce the Sabbath also, if it really had been instituted; nay, they would use their influence to disannul it, as the infidels on the continent endeavoured by all means to do in our times.

But is Dr. Paley's statement, in this passage, accurate? Is he well grounded in averring, that not even the *obscurest* allusion is made to the seventh day, before the call of Abraham, or in the history of the three first patriarchs? The only account on which the least dependance can be placed respecting these remote ages, is contained exclusively in the

Book of Genesis. Yet the division of time by WEEKS, of which some traces at least may be found in other histories, and of other nations, seems to have been the remains of an original tradition, retained among the descendants of Noah, as separated into many regions before the days of Abraham.

Is it then a fact, that there are no intimations, and not even the obscurest allusions made to the Sabbath, or the seventh day, in the Book of Genesis? "Yet seven days," says the Lord, "and I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days, and forty nights." (Gen. vii. 4.) This might be left unnoticed, except as it introduces that which follows in the next chapter. "At the end of forty days, Noah opened the windows of the ark which he had made, and he sent forth a raven."—"And he stayed yet *other* seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark."—"And he stayed yet *other* seven days, and sent forth the dove which returned not again to him any more." (Gen. viii. 6—12) Is here no intimation that the end of every seven days brought with it something peculiar and distinguishing from the end of any other period of time? May it not, nay, does it not imply, that the Sabbath was observed in the ark, at the close of the devotions of which the dove was once and again sent forth?

The word which is translated *week*, occurs twice in the twentieth chapter of Genesis, (ver. 27—29.) and is used in various parts of Scripture for a term of time containing seven days. (Deut. xvi. 9. 10. 16; Jer. v. 24; Ezek. xlv. 21; Dan. ix. 25, 26, 27.) This is at least an *obscure* intimation, that the division of time into *weeks* was known even in Laban's family: and whence should this division originate, but from the appointment of the Sabbath? Or, why should that precise term be used, which every where, after the giving of the Law, has reference to

\* It is very inaccurate, though very common, to call the whole nation, at this early period, Jews, *Judeans*, from Judah. The name is never used in Scripture, till after the division of the nation into two kingdoms, under Jeroboam, and seldom till after the dispersion of the Ten Tribes.

the division of time, by the weekly return of the Sabbath, if the Sabbath had never yet been appointed or known?

If, however, no traces at all *could* be found in the history, of any regard to the seventh day, before the time of Moses, this would by no means prove that no appointment of the Sabbath had been made. There is not the least trace in the whole of the Old Testament, from Moses to Malachi, of the observance instituted in the Law concerning the red heifer which was to be burnt, and the ashes collected, and mixed with water, for a water of purifying the unclean. (Num. xix.) Yet who doubts whether this was ever *instituted*; or, indeed, whether it was generally observed? The Apostle speaks of it as an ordinance well known, and in common use. (Heb. ix. 13.) No instance, in like manner, occurs, in which several other legal appointments are mentioned, after the time of their institution, till the close of their history, so that *entire* silence would not prove the negative.

Again; Dr. Paley considers the mention of the Sabbath made in the history of Israel, previously to the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, as its "first actual institution." But let the narrative be carefully examined: "It came to pass on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe, and that which remaineth over lay up for to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath to the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days shall ye gather it, but on

the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long do ye refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." (Exod. xvi. 22—30.)

It does not appear that any order had previously been given to the people in this matter: but finding a more abundant supply of manna on the sixth day, and, as it is highly probable, having been accustomed on the sixth day, to make some preparation for the seventh, when they had it in their power, they of their own accord gathered a double quantity. Had any public directions or orders been given to this effect, the rulers especially must have known it, as they would have been employed in making them known to the rest of the people. In this case, then, how could it be, that they should come to inform Moses, as if something unexpected, and, as they feared, wrong, had taken place? Again, is the answer of Moses at all like the "actual institution" of a most important ordinance, which had never before been known or thought of? Is it not evidently the pointing out to them of a previous institution, which many of them had lost sight of, or deemed not obligatory on the present occasion? Indeed, the whole is most evidently a reference to things already known, but lost sight of, or forgotten; and not the enacting of an original law, the institution of an original ordinance. A law was indeed given, but that law was, that none should go out on the seventh day "to gather manna," and not the law of the Sabbath itself. This law and command-



ment some broke, and were rebuked for it: but the obligation of resting on the Sabbath Day is throughout taken for granted. If similar language were found in any act of parliament, would not it be supposed to relate to some *previously* existing law? Would it be regarded as an actual and most important, and entirely *new* act of the legislature? But if the language of Moses refers to any existing law, in some measure known to Israel, what law, except that in the second chapter of Genesis, can be intended?

It is highly probable that Moses wrote the Book of Genesis, while he remained with Jethro as a shepherd; and that some of the leading contents of it were before this time made known to the people.

In entire coincidence with this view of the whole transaction, the observance of the Sabbath is enjoined in the Decalogue, in a form entirely different from that of the other Commandments; and evidently referring to an observance before known, but which the people were prone to forget. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." This seems to refer to something more full and express on the subject, than the regulations in the sixteenth chapter which have been considered; and this idea is confirmed by the words, "the seventh day *is* the Sabbath," not *shall be*. So to Israel the seventh day is called "the Sabbath (or rest) of the Lord thy God," with evident allusion to the narration contained in the second of Genesis: "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he *rested* on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sancti-

fied it, because on it he had *rested* from all his work which God created and made." (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) Thus the commandment also is enforced by similar language: "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and *rested* the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." The words rendered *keep, holy, hallowed, and sanctified*, are, in the original, the same modification of the same verb, which renders the resemblance of the two passages more exact than it appears in the translation.

This commandment forms a part of the *moral* law, which is allowed to be of universal and permanent obligation on mankind, as far as made known to them; and is enforced by a consideration which applies equally to the whole human race. On what grounds then can it reasonably be supposed to have lost its authority under the Christian dispensation? Our Saviour, indeed, as "Lord also of the Sabbath-day," might not only explain and enforce this commandment, but also change the day of the seven which should be kept holy; for whether the seventh or the first day of the week, is merely a circumstance of the institution, and not at all essential to its substantial requirement of sanctifying one seventh part of our time, in the manner prescribed: while the very term, "Lord of the Sabbath-day," implies that the institution which should be made would be of equal obligation. In the Decalogue there is nothing *ceremonial* enjoined concerning the sacred day of rest; but since it was also intended, in some respects, to form a part both of the *ritual* and of the *judicial* law—the magistrates' rule in administering justice, with a special regard to the nation of Israel—we find that in other places more particular rules are given, and even the penalty of death is annexed to the violation of its external requisitions. (Exod. xxxi. 13—17; xxxv. 2, 3;



Num. xv. 32—36.) Several also of the solemn days appointed to be strictly observed, during the sacred festivals, were called *sabbaths*, and were allowed by a part of the ritual law, and lost their obligation when that law, which was but a “shadow of good things to come,” had received its accomplishment. (Lev. xvi. 31; xxiii. 24. 32. 38; xxv. 4; Neh. x. 33; Isa. i. 13.) To these the Apostle evidently refers, when he says, “Let no man judge you in meat, and in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ,” (Col. ii. 16, 17,) and not exclusively, or principally, of the day of sacred rest, which had nothing typical in its original institution, except as a shadow of the blessed holy rest of heaven. (Heb. iv. 9. Gr.) The very position that the rest of heaven is the *keeping of a sabbath*, (*σαββατισμος*,) powerfully conveys the idea that the holy rest of the Sabbath was intended to be a most *spiritual* and *heavenly* part of man’s religion on earth; an anticipation of heaven, and a preparation for that perfect worship, and complacency, and rest in God which will take place there: indeed, the Apostle’s whole argument implies this. But how will this idea consist with the Sabbath having been only a *ritual* appointment to Israel; a part of the temporary dispensation of Moses; losing its *authoritative* energy, when that ceased; and thenceforth, no more than a matter of expediency?

Indeed, where the word is used in the plural, *sabbaths* or *sabbath-days*, it generally refers to those other instituted seasons of rest, as well as to the weekly sabbaths. The Fourth Commandment, as it stands in the twentieth of Exodus, is the language of JEHOVAH himself, as a Law-giver; but as it occurs again in the fifth of Deuteronomy, it is introduced by Moses in the character, as it were, of

a preacher, and as a part of his authoritative and most earnest instructions given to a new generation of Israel, a very short time before his death. “Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.” Having thus referred to the original commandment, of which they were already in possession, he omitted the reason given for the original institution of the Sabbath as a memorial of the creation, which belongs to all mankind; and annexed an additional reason for Israel’s particular regard to that appointment, from their peculiar obligations to the Lord their God. “Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day.” (Deut. v. 12. 15.) Other nations, having turned from God to idols, were left to “walk in their own ways;” but Israel were redeemed “that they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.” (Ps. cv. 43. 45.) This, therefore, was additional to Israel; but it did not vacate the original reason, which, however neglected or disregarded, was common to them with the rest of the human race. The Lord indeed says to Ezekiel respecting Israel exclusively, “Moreover I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they may know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” (Ezek. xx. 12.) This Dr. Paley thinks greatly confirms his opinion, that the first actual institution of the Sabbath was made, in respect to the manna, as was above stated. But (not to dwell on the word being plural, and so including the other seasons called *Sabbaths*, as well as the weekly *Sabbaths*,) might not God, who, as Creator, had at first given the Sabbath as a day of sacred rest to Adam and all his descendants, for their highest

good; after they had almost universally forsaken him to worship idols, and with him renounced his Sabbath; give his Sabbath renewedly to Israel, as a *special favour*, as a sign of his separating them from all other nations; and as a means of national and personal sanctity? What reason can be assigned why he *might not* do this?

Indeed, the same method of reasoning would go far to prove the whole Decalogue to be *ritual*, and to have no authoritative and obligatory force on any other people than Israel. For are not the Ten Commandments introduced by this declaration—"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage?" But what sober theologian doubts the universal, unchangeable authority and obligation of that Law, which, with this introduction, was delivered by JEHOVAH to Israel? Why then doubt the authority and obligation of the Fourth Commandment, for a reason which would by no means be allowed conclusive, in respect of the other nine?

In the historical and prophetic part of the Old Testament, from the days of Moses, to the close of that dispensation, the weekly Sabbath is spoken of, and the sanctification of it enforced, as of *moral* obligation, and not as merely a ritual observance; and this even by those prophets, who in many things were led to speak of mere ceremonial obedience in language of another kind. The Lord by the Psalmist says to Israel, "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High." (Ps. l. 8. 13, 14.) Yet another Psalm is entitled, "a Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-day;" and it begins, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing

praises unto thy name, O Most High! to shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." (Ps. xcii. title, 1, 2.) And the whole of this "Song for the Sabbath-day," relates to those things in religion which the other Psalm so decidedly referred to, sacrifices and ceremonial observances.

Isaiah also says, in the name of the Lord, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and of the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me. The new moons and Sabbaths I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meetings: your new moons and appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them." (Isa. i. 11—14.) Yet the same prophet, evidently predicting evangelical times, says, "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs, that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and lay hold on my covenants: even unto them will I give a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves unto the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make

them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings, and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar." (Isa. lvi. 1—7.) On this Scripture, I observe, 1. That the keeping of the Sabbath is closely connected with "keeping the hand from doing any evil;" and with "serving the Lord, loving the name of the Lord, and being his servants;" things most undeniedly of *moral* obligation. 2. That "the sons of the Stranger," are called upon "to keep the Sabbath from polluting it;" where not the least allusion is made to circumcision, or any ritual observance, except sacrifices. They might become the servants of the Lord, without taking on them the yoke of the ceremonial law, but not without "keeping the Sabbath from polluting it." 3. Many uncircumcised Gentiles sent or brought sacrifices to the temple before the abolition of the legal dispensation: they professed their faith and love, and regard to the true God and his worship in this particular: though not proselyted to the religion of Moses: but spiritual "sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," are in several instances predicted in language taken from the typical oblations. 4. The word is plural, *sabbaths*, when the eunuchs are mentioned. These might be Israelites, and in waiting for that "salvation of God which was near to come, his righteousness to be revealed;" it was proper that they should "walk in all the *ordinances* as well as commandments of the Lord." (Ps. xxiv. 3—5; 1. 25; Luke i. 6.)

In another chapter, full of exhortations, exclusively of *moral* obligation, and with undoubted reference to the times of the Gospel, the prophet concludes in this manner: "If thou turn thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a *delight*, *the holy of the Lord, honourable*; and

shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord: and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.) Now, where is similar language used in the Old Testament, concerning any ritual observance, concerning any thing peculiar to the Mosaic dispensation? "*A delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable.*" What is there *ceremonial* in that which is required in order to honour God, namely, the hallowing his holy day? What, that does not most perfectly accord with that spiritual worship, to which the Gospel calls us? What, that is not most congenial with the inmost desires and pleasures of those who are the most spiritual worshippers of God under the Gospel? What, that is not exactly suited to prepare the soul for "that keeping of a Sabbath reserved for the people of God." (Heb. iv. 9. Gr.) What, "that is not an anticipation of that sacred and delightful rest?" And can we suppose such language to be used concerning that "which was decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away?" In this view, it may be worth the reader's while to compare the language of Jeremiah also, when speaking of legal observances, (Jer. vii. 21—23,) with that which he uses even to the same people, in respect of the weekly Sabbath. (Jer. xvii. 21—27.)

But I must hasten to the New Testament. And here, let it be first and most attentively considered, with what exactness our Lord repeatedly distinguished between that which was lawful, or not lawful, to be done on the Sabbath-day. Works of *real* necessity, of mercy to man, or even to beasts, and works of piety, are stated to be lawful: all other labour, unlawful.



(Matt. xii. 1—14; Mark iii. 3—5; Luke vi. 1—11; xiii. 10—17; John vii. 22, 23.) Now, if the Sabbath was about to cease, as a part of the *Divine law*, being merely ceremonial, and not of moral obligation, why should our Lord enter so explicitly on these exact distinctions, which would be of no use beyond the present time? Why are they so particularly recorded, in the Evangelists, for future generations, if they form no part of our rule of conduct under the New Testament? But if he, “the Lord of the Sabbath-day,” while he changed the day from the seventh to the first of the week, intended the moral obligation to continue substantially the same in his kingdom to the end of time, then all this was obviously needful, and most highly important.

The seventh day of the week was appointed as the season of sacred rest, as a memorial of the Lord’s resting on the seventh day, after having finished the creation. This continued also under the Mosaic dispensation, there having been no peculiar reason why any change should be made. But when the Divine Saviour, having finished on earth his work of man’s redemption, arose from the dead on the “first day of the week,” it was peculiarly proper that a memorial should be appointed of this grand and interesting event, on which every human hope depends. To fallen man, *redemption* is a far greater benefit than *creation*. “We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but, *above all*, for thine inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here, then, is a sufficient and satisfactory reason, why “the Lord of the Sabbath-day” should substitute the first day of the week instead of the seventh, as the memorial of a far more exalted blessing to his church, and to the world of fallen man at large, than even creation itself.

While men were few, and lived

nearly in the same part of the globe; and while the worshippers of the true God were few, and generally inhabited the same part of the country, it would be easy to know which was the seventh day, or the Sabbath; but, when the world became inhabited in every part, and the worshippers of God were found in all the four quarters of the globe, it could not be so easy to determine with certainty the appointed season. Of two navigators sailing round the world, in opposite directions, one would lose, and the other gain a day in his computation: there would be *two days’* variation in their calculation of time. Now, which would be the seventh day of the week to each of these navigators? This may shew, that the precise day, or hour, is not essential to the moral obligation; and that the substitution of the first day instead of the seventh, was only a circumstantial and not an essential alteration. And if in each country on the globe that day, which according to general computation is the first day of the week, be observed as a memorial of our Redeemer’s resurrection, the commandment is obeyed, though the day be not exactly the same in Britain as at Calcutta.

The very day when our Lord arose, “the first day of the week,” is especially noted by the evangelist.

“The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” (John xx. 19.) On the first day of the week, as it is generally admitted, he met them again with the same gracious salutation. (ver. 26.) “As Jesus arose on the first day of the week, so the Holy Spirit descended on the same, seven weeks, or the fiftieth day afterwards; which tended to honour that day, that was soon to be set apart as the Christian Sabbath.” (Note to Scott’s Family Bible—Acts

ii. 1.) "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples were come together, to break bread, Paul preached to them." "It is not said, that the disciples were called together as on a special occasion, but that they came together according to general practice. Hence it is evident, that Christians were accustomed to assemble for religious worship on the first day of the week; but the change from the *seventh* to the *first* seems to have been gradually and silently introduced, by example rather than by express precept." (Note, Scott on Acts xx. 7—12.) The Jewish converts still observed the seventh-day Sabbath: and the Apostles took the opportunity, which the Sabbath gave them, for meeting the Jews and preaching to them in their synagogues; but it does not appear, from the history, that Christians in any other way observed it: so that all the authority and obligation of the original institution was thus virtually given by "the Lord of the Sabbath-day, to the sacred rest of the first day of the week."

"Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (1 Cor. xvi. 2.) "The argument from this passage for the observance of the Lord's day as a Christian Sabbath, is very conclusive; for unless this were a custom in the apostolical churches, why should 'the first day of the week' be mentioned in this connection?" (Note, *ibid.* 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.)

But it will be inquired, Did the primitive Christians regard the whole first day of the week as sacred time? Is it not said, that they held their assemblies in the evening? Could servants and slaves, or even the relations of idolaters or Jews, keep holy the Lord's day, as the Fourth Commandment required the Israelites to hallow the Sabbath?—To this I would answer, If the words of the Fourth Commandment itself be carefully examined, it will be seen, that a

large proportion of the responsibility, as to hallowing the Sabbath, belonged to the heads of families; to whom especially the command is addressed. Many things, even in the families of Israelites, would be *necessary* to servants, and others in inferior stations, which were not *necessary* in their superiors; and the crime of rendering them *necessary* rested on the latter, especially in the case of slaves.

Thus it is in the West Indies: the slaves who embrace Christianity, I apprehend, all acknowledge the obligation of the Lord's day, and count themselves criminal if they willingly violate it; yet they are often compelled, by strong necessity, to do many things on that day which are inconsistent with the entire rest which it requires. One of them, being commanded by his owner to go and take him some fish on the Lord's day, and being told that he should be paid for it, answered, "Nay, if you force me to labour on the Lord's day, I will not take any thing for what I do."

But this partial violation must have been far more generally the case in countries where no Sabbath was at all acknowledged; except the seventh-day Sabbath among small numbers. It appears to me, that to observe the sacred day as it ought to be observed, in countries where Christianity is professed, would, in these circumstances, have been impracticable. The Lord "willeth mercy and not sacrifice:" the letter of the precept must bow to the spirit of it; especially in respect of those numbers who, in inferior stations, formed a part of heathen families. But, in proportion as heads of families embraced Christianity, and their numbers were multiplied, it is manifest, from all subsequent history, that the Christian day of rest was sanctified, and had in honour, as the allotment of time which "the Lord of the Sabbath-day" had demanded for himself; and by no means as merely a matter



of expediency, and advantageous, in giving the opportunity of assembling in sacred worship." For in the first times of Christianity it gave no such opportunity, above what might have been enjoyed on any other day; nay, much less to the Jewish converts than the seventh day would have done. Yet it might be questioned, whether the Christian day of sacred rest were not more conscientiously observed, before the observance of it was made a part of the law or custom of many nations, than it ever has been since. Yet still this *law* and *custom* gives many and great advantages both to ministers and Christians in general, in hallowing the Lord's day: and I own, I cannot see the reason why Christian rulers should not be considered as performing an important duty, in restraining all those practices on the Lord's day which interfere with men's thus hallowing it; as much as Nehemiah did his duty in enforcing the observance of the Jewish Sabbath (Neh. xiii. 15—21;) provided they do not interfere with the rights of conscience, in things more immediately pertaining to the worship of God, or the manner of performing that worship,—or enforce by *penalty* any thing beyond the external observance, and even that only *negatively*.

But the way in which the Apostle John speaks, in the book of the Revelations, on this subject, seems to me fully decisive. He evidently calls "the first day of the week" THE LORD'S DAY, (*Κυριακή ἡμέρα*, as St. Paul calls the Eucharist *Κυριακὸν δεῖπνον*, THE LORD'S SUPPER.) Now, if "the first day of the week" be "the Lord's day," in the same sense that the Eucharist is "the Lord's supper;" the one the memorial of his resurrection, the other of his crucifixion; surely the observance of it is no matter of mere expediency, but of the highest possible obligation. *The day is his*; and that sufficiently shews in what manner it ought to be employed, as far as op-

portunity and ability will permit. Surely the Lord's day should be wholly devoted to the Lord; and none of its hours employed in a secular, a sensual, or a dissipated manner. Compare the above expression with the words of the Fourth Commandment: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." In like manner, "The first day is the day of the Lord thy Redeemer. The Lord hath blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Has not the Lord Jesus blessed the first day, and hallowed it? Is not the same stamp of Divine authority given to the Christian day of sacred rest, under the New Testament, as was given to Israel's day of sacred rest, under the Old Testament? In this connection let us again consider the words of the evangelical prophet already quoted, and see if they be not even more peculiarly appropriate to the Lord's day, than they could possibly be to the Sabbath of Israel.

Can any reason be assigned, why the memorial of the creation, or of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, should be honoured, and hallowed, and a delight, which does not apply with far more energy, to the observance of the Lord's day, the memorial of redemption, and the Redeemer's triumphant resurrection?

If I mistake not, the Lord's day, as the season of sacred rest in the times of the Messiah, was itself foretold in prophecy. "The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it." Ps. cxviii. 22—25. What day, it may be asked, did the Spirit of God who spake by the Psalmist, intend? Must not we answer, The day on which the crucified Redeemer began his triumphs and victories, even "the Lord's day." And if so, shall we not hallow that day, thus given, thus set apart, "this holy of the Lord,"



this "honourable day?" Shall we suffer any of it to pass away in indolence and needless indulgence, or in any thing which a truly enlightened Israelite would have thought inconsistent with his Sabbath-day. I am not, however, *explaining* the commandment, but enforcing its obligation; and therefore I here conclude my remarks.

T. S.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE most satisfactory explanation I have seen of the first passage alluded to by E——s, Gen. ii. 4—6,\* is that given by Willet in his Commentary on Genesis. He thinks that the negative used in the former part of the verse, is to be supplied in the latter; a construction the more probable as it is perfectly consistent with the idiom of the language. There is an analogous form of expression in Exod. xx. 4, where the negative particle, which is used in the beginning, is understood throughout. Though questioning the accuracy of the authorized version be liable to diminish the confidence in it, of those particularly who are unacquainted with the original language; yet, when the rules of construction, and the opinions of learned men, justify us in adopting that interpretation which the consistency of the sentence requires, we should seize with alacrity the opportunity of wresting an argument from the sceptic, and enlisting it in the cause of Revelation: but I fear that it requires a far more than human power to convince one "who, having trusted to his own wisdom, has become a fool," and has submitted to believe the monstrous absurdity of a spontaneous creation.

In reference to the second passage, Ephes. ii. 2, the word *ἀνρ*, which occasions the principal difficulty, is certainly twice used by Homer, to signify darkness; but it is rather

extraordinary that in both instances the feminine article is prefixed: there is, however, a passage in the Seventeenth Idyllium of Theocritus, where it is evidently used to signify the infernal regions

Τὰ δὲ μύρα τῆνα

Ἀέρι πᾶ κεκρύπται, ὅθεν πάλιν οὐκέτι νόσος.

But there is still a difficulty attending τῷ πνεύματι: our translation seems to refer it to τὸν ἀρχοντα which is impossible, neither will it make sense if put in apposition with τῆς ἐξουσίας τῷ αἵματι. The scholium on this verse appears to be the most probable interpretation "τὸν ἐξουσιαν λαχόντα τῷ ἐν τῷ αἵματι πνεύματι; ἡτοι τῶν πονηρῶν πνευματῶν:" this would have been more satisfactory if the expression in the original had been τῶν πνευματῶν τῷ αἵματι: it is, however, easy to conceive πνεύματος to include all those beings who partake of the πνεύμα πονηρον, and that it should be placed after αἵματι to be near that part of the sentence to which it more immediately belongs. Under this supposition, the passage may be rendered thus—"According to him who hath dominion over the infernal spirits, his agents with the children of disobedience."

S.

Another correspondent, who signs himself : τῷ, takes the same view of these passages with S., with the additional remark, that "the expression in Ephes. ii. 2, seems to refer to a Jewish tradition, that the air was inhabited by evil spirits;" and "Satan," he adds, "is called by Jewish writers, 'lord of the winds.'"

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

To investigate the revealed will of God, as handed down to us in the sacred Scriptures, is, doubtless, a most effectual method of ascertaining the nature of Divine truth; provided the investigation be conducted with a spirit becoming the importance of the subject. But I appre-

\* Christian Observer for April, p. 212.

hend, that unless there appear a palpable and gross deviation from the true import of the original, when compared with parallel texts; and this after a very careful and conscientious inquiry; little benefit, or rather much injury, will arise to mankind, by proposing alterations in the generally received and approved translation. In the present day especially, pretenders to religious information are so much more common than disciples in Christian principles and practice, that in order to repress the vanity which too often arises from knowledge when unaccompanied with piety, I would earnestly recommend a candid and liberal construction of the received translation, rather than the adoption of new readings and latitudinarian conjectures.

A moment's consideration will be sufficient to shew, that it is necessary to guard very carefully against any infringement upon the character of the Scriptures, as now publicly authorized and distributed. If a doubt is suffered to exist respecting the general truth and faithfulness of the translation, it will tend to loosen that just and proper confidence which now forms the basis of the hopes and joys of many unlearned but pious minds, and may, perhaps, eventually lead to the admission of flagrant deviations from the true import of the most plain and obvious passages.

I might perhaps, be justified in referring to page 346 in your last volume; and, while pointing to the weight of learning and piety engaged in the received translation of the Bible, might fairly deduce this conclusion, that the host of great and good men there on record, though fallible like ourselves, and by no means possessing our advantages, cannot be supposed to have fallen into many errors of such magnitude as to render it necessary that the correction of them should be attempted, even at the risk of endan-

gering the safety of that invaluable treasure which we have the happiness to possess.

Having thus adverted generally to this subject, I would, with all possible respect for the learning and research of your correspondent H. S., take occasion to observe, that while the translation of the passage in Genesis, which he proposes to adopt, appears, at first sight, to convey a meaning very different from what has been generally received, the real sentiment of the original text is, in fact, neither lost sight of nor misapprehended in our present mode of reading. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." (Gen. xxii. 14.) As if it were said, "According to the current observation; made on this remarkable transaction to this day, or, agreeably with the generally received opinion, founded thereon, and in use at the time of Moses, that where faith in the promises of God is exercised, a corresponding provision, as heretofore in the mount of the Lord, will be *seen* or experienced as it respects the recipient; or will be *provided*, as it respects the Agent or Giver." This will appear to be a sentiment, naturally intended to be recorded, by the grateful, and obedient Patriarch, when he affixed a name to the place where he had received so signal a mark of the approbation of his Lord, and had obtained by his constancy the name of "the father of the faithful."

In support of this opinion, I beg leave to cite the Latin translation of the same passage, together with the translation used by the French Protestants, in both which, the verbs *providere*, and *pourvoir*, seem properly adapted, by their etymological signification, to convey the full and enlarged sentiment of the text. "Propterea vocavit Abraham nomen



loci illius, *Jehova providebit : ex quo dici solet hodie, in monte Jehovæ providebitur.*" *Amstelodami* 1669.

"Et Abraham apella le nom de ce lieu là, *l'Eternel y pourvoira ; c'est pourquoi on dit aujourd'hui, il y sera pourvu sur la montagne de l'Eternel.*" *A Amsterdam* 1747.

Perhaps, however, the most simple rendering of the passage would be as follows :—And Abraham called the name of that place **JEHOVAH-JIREH**, (*the Lord will provide ;*) as it is said this day in the mount **JEHOVAH-JIREH**, (*the Lord will provide.*)

S. M.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE term Charity is so frequently misapplied ; it is so often appealed to as an indefinite principle of action, while its genuine influence is but little understood and exemplified ; it is so vaguely, unreasonably, and unscripturally extended by some, and so narrowed and constricted by others, that I trust I shall be forgiven for attempting to review the limits which should define its influence on the heart of the Christian.

Real charity will ever be found active, exactly in proportion as the great truths of Christianity exert their prevailing tendencies on the character of the individual. Our Lord instructs his disciples in the duty of cultivating this loveliest of Christian graces ; not as an occasional act, or as the natural impulse of excited feeling, but as the constant disposition of a truly renovated heart.

Since, however, the truths of the Gospel are destined to pass through *media* so differing as the minds of men, we cannot expect a perfect coincidence of opinion. In different individuals, the habits of thought and action are so dissimilar, that we must not be surprised when we observe those who think at all often forming conclusions the most opposite from nearly the same premises. The object of the present remarks is to as-

certain how far the principle of Christian charity may and ought to be extended in such cases, so as to preserve a perfect standard of rectitude on the one hand, and yet not destroy the unity of Christian society on the other.

The exercise of charity does not require, and certainly must not involve, a dereliction of principle. This would be to destroy at once uprightness of character, and to blend the prominent and distinctive features of truth in one indiscriminate mass of confuted and heterogeneous opinions. In principles so important as those which regulate our affections and direct our conduct, it is necessary that our views be precise and well defined, and that our judgment be duly informed on those points which concern our own and our neighbour's welfare. We must be enabled to appeal with confidence to the standard of truth, the holy Scriptures, for the rectitude of our motives, and the consistency of our practice. At the same time, we must be careful not to confound *prejudice* with principle. We are too frequently disposed, from partial consideration and hasty reflection, to form erroneous conclusions : and from the constant habit of acting upon these determinations they are so interwoven with all our ideas, they are so perpetually awakened by a thousand different associations, and they become at length so congenial with our feelings, that we readily mistake what is, in effect, the offspring of prejudice, for the logical deductions of the most correct principle. Besides this, we are so much the creatures of circumstance and association, that we are perpetually liable to confound our impressions and feelings with the results of deliberate judgment. We imbibe many prejudices during the progress of education ; some of which, doubtless, may prove essentially useful, and become most properly permanent and stable principles of conduct ; but since our education is conducted by



those who are themselves far short of perfection, and are exposed like others to the influence of prejudice, it is manifest that some useless bias, some hurtful obliquity, will almost necessarily be impressed upon the character. Against this effect we should sedulously guard, and carefully avoid mistaking its silent influence for the dictates of reason and reflection.

But though charity does not involve a dereliction of principle, yet it surely requires that even our principles, those secret motives of our conduct which ought to be uniformly acted upon, should not be rendered ostentatiously prominent, so as to disgust where they can do no good. I do not say we are to keep our sentiments out of sight: far from it; we must be ever ready to inculcate and defend them; but charity demands that we should avoid that narrow spirit which cannot endure the slightest difference of opinion. We should even, I conceive, cheerfully make those little sacrifices of feeling which will induce us sometimes to be silent, and to bear with the prejudice, the ignorance, and the intolerance of others, rather than suffer charity to be wounded in an angry and hopeless contest against inveterate obstinacy and bigoted prepossession.

In these remarks I allude only to points of confessedly minor importance. There are some grand principles of Divine Revelation which charity cannot allow to be compromised: there are some cardinal truths, the very soul and substance of religion, which we cannot for a moment yield without depreciating them; which we cannot overlook, without tacitly questioning their importance; and which we dare not abandon, unless we are prepared to admit the perfect indifference of that momentous inquiry, "What is truth?" But the mischief is, that even those who agree in their interpretation of the

principal doctrines of Christianity—because they chance to differ on some minuter points, the reception or rejection of which has been identified with the well-being of a party—too often make the latter their standard of real piety, and contend for them with more vehemence than for those truths which are allowed on all hands to be necessary to salvation. Thus it often happens, that men who quarrel with a test, under other circumstances, erect a test of admission to their own little society,—a test not of *belief in the Lord Jesus Christ*, as the only propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of his people, but of implicit adherence to the peculiarities of a sect. I have often admired the candour of our church, whose doctrinal views, though clear and scriptural, are yet so charitably framed as to include and reconcile many of these zealous disputants: indeed on this very subject of church discipline, Christian charity, I imagine, demands a kind of tolerating spirit. It happens not unfrequently, that those who coincide in their views of Divine Revelation, will still differ about the peculiar form of ecclesiastical government and regulations. Certainly, candour requires, in this case, the subserviency of individual prejudices to the paramount claims of our common faith. Our opinions on such subjects, even though correct, must not be erected into principles upon which it would be *criminal to be silent*. Something, surely, must be left to every man's conscience; especially as the church of Christ has undeniably existed under different external forms; and it is probable (I speak at least my own sentiments,) that the point was left indeterminate, in order that ecclesiastical discipline might be variously modified, according to the existing circumstances of the civil governments with which Christianity should become connected. Other persons may and do think differently; and I can readily

“agree to differ” with those of my brethren whose views on such subjects may be opposed to my own.

Humility, as well as charity, requires that we should tolerate the opinions of others; for we should recollect, that man is a fallen creature, and that on this side the grave his views are obscured, and his perceptions rendered inaccurate, by the influence of his alienation from God, and his natural bias to evil. He is not perfect; nor can we wonder, therefore, if his perverted judgment should frequently hurry him into error. Remembering our own weakness, and liability to misconception and prejudice, we should learn to retain our opinions with gentleness, though with firmness, and to combat what we conceive to be the prejudices of others, with decision as to our own views, but with a tender regard to the feelings of our brother.

Charity demands the exercise of love to those who differ from us. We must not look on them with a jealous eye; we must not be capriciously disposed to question their sincerity; we must not blazen their follies, or hold up to ridicule their prejudices. We must go with them so far as we can tread on common and scriptural ground; and when our opinions diverge, supposing the divergency not to be of a fatal kind, we must still “wish them God speed;” assured that though in non-essentials we disagree, we have yet the same Saviour for our confidence, we are engaged in the service of the same Master, and hope to arrive at the same heaven hereafter. If our neighbour be a true Christian, we are bound to love him *as such*, by whatever name he may be named.

℣. 100.

#### FAMILY SERMONS.—No. CII.

Psalm civ. 34.—*My meditation of Him shall be sweet.*

Of all the duties which become professed Christians, there is none more

usually neglected among men in general, than that of calm and deliberate reflection upon the concerns of religion. We observe persons constantly frequenting the house of God, and seeming for the moment to have some knowledge and enjoyment of those things which relate to their eternal peace, yet forgetting almost instantly what they have heard, and suffering the sacred impression to be effaced almost as soon as it was formed. While we pray that we may “read, mark, and learn” the holy Scriptures, we too often forget so inwardly to “digest” them that they may conduce to our spiritual nourishment, and strengthen us for our heavenly warfare. If we have any pretence to the name of Christian, the neglect of an outward duty, the omission of our customary devotions, or of attendance on public worship, the breach of the Divine command “to do good and to distribute,” the indulgence of unhallowed tempers, or the stirring of worldly or sensual desire, will be followed by proper feelings of sorrow and repentance, accompanied with prayer to God for pardon and assistance; yet amidst all, perhaps, we neglect that especial means of grace which, in many cases, is one of the most useful of all for preventing a recurrence of the evil; we mean religious meditation. And assuredly if it be a sin not to read the Scriptures, and attend public worship, it is a sin also not to treasure up and revolve in our hearts those sacred truths which we have received; not to endeavour, by serious reflection, when in private, to turn them, by the blessing of God, to a practical account.

For the purpose of impressing upon our minds the duty under consideration, let us view—

- I. The proper objects of spiritual meditation.
- II. The benefits resulting from it.
- III. The best method of promoting and conducting it.

I. The proper objects of spiritual



meditation are the truths revealed in the word of God, the doctrines and precepts, the invitations and warnings, the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, in all their bearings and relations to the temporal and eternal concerns of mankind, and more especially with reference to our own spiritual state. The field is indeed too vast to admit, within the compass of a single sermon, of our going over all its boundaries. It may also be remarked, that in proportion as our knowledge of divine subjects increases, they will appear more and more interesting and comprehensive, so that the longest life devoted to the study of the Scriptures would be insufficient to exhaust their sacred stores. There are, however, particular topics which more peculiarly call for our daily meditation;—such as the holiness, justice, and goodness of God; his presence with, and inspection over us; our own guilt and misery as sinners in his sight; the means of salvation which he hath provided through the merits and sacrifice of Christ, and our personal need of the Holy Spirit's influence, to convert our hearts, and to make us meet for the kingdom of heaven. It should also be our daily employment carefully to examine ourselves, to search out our peculiar sins, negligences, and ignorances, and deeply to consider not only the way in which they may be pardoned, but the means by which we may be delivered from their prevalence. A person who never reflects in private, and as in the immediate presence of the Searcher of Hearts, upon these important concerns, cannot expect, whatever other means of information he may possess, that he shall come to a right knowledge of them. Meditation, indeed, if accompanied by earnest prayer, will be found to tend more, perhaps, than any thing else, to render the "hearing of the ear" powerful for the conversion of the heart, and is therefore often employed by the Holy Spirit to effect his Divine purposes of mercy upon the souls

of men. When a sinner is once brought earnestly to reflect within himself on his state with respect to God, and, in the view of his guilt and danger, to inquire "What must I do to be saved?" a beam of hope rises upon his path, which, till that salutary meditation occurred, was covered with an awful darkness, and would have led him to eternal destruction. The Gospel now becomes to him a subject of the most anxious consideration, and proper objects for employing his thoughts will never be absent from his mind.

II. We are now to consider some of the benefits which will result from the practice we have recommended. These are very numerous and important; for by duly reflecting upon what we already know, the knowledge which before only floated in the understanding begins to influence the heart. It is easy, for example, to repeat penitential confessions of our sinfulness and guilt; but they will never excite truly godly sorrow, till we begin anxiously to look into our inmost souls, in order to perceive how far we resemble the descriptions which are given of human nature in the word of God. The excellences also of Christ Jesus, and the freedom of his salvation, will not much affect us as mere truths, till we feel their suitability to our own case, and have reflected sufficiently upon ourselves to know our guilt and weakness, our impenitence and misery. It is impossible that the Saviour can be duly valued by those who do not think of him, and enter into the nature and excellence of his offices as they respect their own spiritual wants. It is by reflecting often and earnestly upon holy things that the affections become excited, and the heart filled with a sense of their unspeakable importance. A few superficial speculations would never have prompted those ardent feelings of love, and joy, and gratitude, and devotion, which abound in the writings of the inspired penmen. *They*



considered frequently and habitually those things which *we* are too apt to suffer to glide from the memory almost as soon as they die away upon the ear. Religion was with *them*, and has been with good men, in every age, a concern of such importance, as to engross the heart in the hours of retirement, and by silently producing there the “peaceable fruits of righteousness,” to render the deportment of its professors indicative of their holy vocation, and worthy of that sacred name by which they were called.

Meditation, in one view of it, may be regarded as conversing with God, and with our own hearts. Enlightened by his presence, and guided by his wisdom, we are enabled to understand more clearly our real condition, and to plead his cause with our own hearts; we learn to see the vanity of our false excuses and “refuges of lies;” and as the defects of our religious character become clearly unfolded to our view, we are incited to more urgent and unwearied supplications for the renewing influences of the Spirit of grace. While we trust to outward impressions, we are too often ready to deceive our own souls, and to mistake the mere stirring of natural affection, or what are merely social feelings in religion, for genuine piety; but the moment we begin to commune with ourselves, no eye seeing us but the eye of God, if our hearts be not right with him, and if they be not truly actuated by religious principle, we shall be likely to discover the defect in our character, and the consequent peril of our situation. We shall learn to value at its true rate of worthlessness whatever pleasure we may feel in discharging the public duties of religion, while our tempers and affections are not brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. And on the other hand, where the heart is sincere, though the affections are languid, earnest meditation on heavenly Christ. *Observ. No. 186.*

things will kindle a brighter flame, and raise the mind to something of a right feeling of the unspeakable glories of the Gospel. Thus it appears that reflection and communion with our own hearts are of high importance to all descriptions of characters;—to the sinner, the hypocrite, the careless, and the uninformed, in order to bring them to the knowledge of their awful condition; and to the true Christian, in order to elevate his hopes and desires, to increase his spiritual knowledge, and not only to open new truths, but to make him enter with more interest into those which he already believes, but which he wishes to understand more fully, and to embrace with more ardour and affection. In circumstances especially of trial or temptation, a few moments’ serious reflection, with earnest prayer to God, will oftentimes have an influence of the most beneficial kind in convincing us of the vanity of the world, and in leading us to Him who is the only refuge for sinners, and the only fountain of true comfort and repose. When the mind is most distressed, and the prospect, either for this world or the next, most gloomy and appalling, the Christian who can retire to his closet, and lift up his heart to his Father which seeth in secret, meditating upon the love of God, and the grace of Christ, breathing after the influences of the Holy Spirit, and pleading the promises of the Gospel, will have a source of Divine consolation far above all that earthly prosperity can bestow. Whether, therefore, we study our best solace and enjoyment, or our spirituality of mind and “growth in grace,” we shall see the propriety of accustoming ourselves to meditate as well as pray, and to drink deeply in private into those important truths of which we do not, perhaps, neglect the public acknowledgment.

III. Spiritual meditation being thus shewn to possess so much impor-

tance, it becomes necessary to inquire into the best method of promoting and conducting it. The duty is difficult on account of the absence of those various helps which assist us in the performance of many others. Where there is nothing to arrest the outward attention, it requires a much greater effort of the mind to make spiritual things appear truly forcible and impressive. The natural senses, far from assisting us in contemplating heavenly realities, serve only to draw us away, and to make us wander from the great objects of attention. Even in the most heavenly-minded Christian, the wing that is spread towards heaven soon begins to flag: how much more, therefore, in the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced! Yet there is no just reason why even *these* should not derive something of the benefit attached to the duty under consideration; and with a view to effect so desirable an end a few instructions may not be unimportant.

1. If, then, we would desire our meditations to be conducive to our spiritual welfare, they should be regular and frequent. As the body is not supported and kept in vigour by an occasional repast, but by daily nourishment, so the soul also requires a stated and frequent supply of holy meditation to keep it alive and active in Divine concerns. The time and mode of our religious contemplations must indeed differ according to our opportunities of serious leisure, and the ability which God may give us for this employment: but even in the youngest, the most illiterate, and the most engaged members of society, there is no adequate excuse for omitting the duty altogether. If we do not meditate, we cannot pray aright; a wider distance will be interposed between God and us; the Holy Spirit will be grieved, and our spirituality of mind will be greatly lessened, if not entirely lost. Our conversation and intercourse with the world cannot partake of the

true spirit of the Gospel, if we do not value and cherish that spirit in our moments of retirement. We should therefore avail ourselves of every favourable season for this delightful and profitable work. But more especially should we engage in it, when the mind is more than usually drawn towards heavenly objects, when the heart is softened by distress, and when we feel most our need of a Divine Saviour, and a celestial Comforter. Upon a sick bed those often learn to meditate upon eternal concerns, who never thought of them before; but the desire of the true Christian is, in the days of *health* and *strength*, to live "the life of faith," and to walk daily with his God, in order that when affliction arises he may know whither to resort, and may find his heavenly Parent a God "nigh at hand, and not afar off," a "very present help in time of trouble."

2. To make our meditations profitable, we should pray and strive to be enabled to conduct them with holy and devout affections. The heart needs much purification to render it fit for heavenly contemplations: it requires to be emptied of the world, and of all objects that would pollute it by their presence. There should be a solemnity when we think upon heavenly things similar to that which we should feel when an angel from heaven, or rather, were the great Judge himself to visit us, and enter into converse with us respecting our everlasting welfare. We too often lose the benefits of sacred reflection by a levity of spirit which prevents our adequately feeling the importance of the subjects in which we are engaged. Yet what can be more interesting and awful than death and judgment, heaven and hell? And what more worthy of engrossing our secret thoughts and leading us to such reflections as may be the means, by God's blessing, of our eternal salvation?

3. With a view still further to render our meditation profitable, we



should cultivate all the powers of the spiritual understanding, and all the graces of the renewed heart. Here there is ample and infinite scope. Whatever faith receives, meditation should lay hold of, and bring into powerful action. No devout feeling, no heavenly affection, no symptom of life towards God, or of deadness to the world, should be suffered to languish and decay. Every thing should be brought nigh, and appear in all its real importance. It does not require enlarged powers of mind, but a regenerate heart, to enable us to enter into this duty; and perhaps no person more enjoys the blessings connected with it than the poor and unlearned Christian, whose hopes are exclusively in heaven, and to whom no subject is so congenial as that of the infinite grace of God unfolded in his revealed word. This remark appears necessary to obviate the objection, that meditation and self-communion are duties that apply only, or chiefly, to the higher orders of intellect, and are of too refined and abstracted a nature for the youthful or uneducated Christian.

In affliction especially, sacred contemplation is a happy privilege, which we may all enjoy. Let us then, at such times, commune with ourselves, and inquire, "*Why* art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?" Let us ascertain the cause; let us trace the evil to its source, and thus gain that self-acquaintance which such an investigation, when humbly conducted, cannot fail to produce. Let us learn our sin, our infirmity, our guilt; feel more deeply our obligations to our Redeemer; cleave to him more firmly; mixing with our meditations devout prayer, which may give them a heavenly direction, and render them conducive to our happiness and spiritual advancement.

4. In order, lastly, to render our religious meditations not only profitable, but, as it is intimated in the text, "sweet" and delightful, we

should learn to reflect upon the blessings treasured in the Gospel in connection with our own wants, and should endeavour so to ascertain the reality of our religious character as to feel that we are not uninterested spectators, but real inheritors of all that we survey. Let us contemplate with the eye of faith all the glories of heaven, and the splendours of the unseen world; let us view a propitiated Creator in his infinite Majesty, and at his right hand his ever-blessed and co-equal Son returned triumphantly from his conquest over sin and death, and opening the kingdom of Heaven to all believers. Let us behold him also as a "High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and who is not only efficaciously pleading in our behalf, but is employed in sending down his Holy Spirit to "guide us into all truth," to comfort and sanctify our hearts, and to direct us in "the way that leadeth to life everlasting." Thus contemplating, in holy meditation, Him who bore our curse, whose hands and feet were pierced for our sake, and whose voice of pity and forgiveness invites us to partake of his salvation; let us deeply reflect upon all his goodness and our own ingratitude—his long-suffering and our provocation,—till those devout affections arise in our souls which may make our meditation sweet, as well as salutary, and which, while they humble us in the very dust, raise him to the throne in our hearts, and render it as much our real delight, as it is our bounden duty to do his will. Spiritual meditation thus conducted will give birth to ardent desires after God and holiness; so that we shall learn, in some humble proportion at least, to adopt the words of the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee;" and shall arrive at the emphatic conclusion of the Apostle, that "to live is Christ, and to die is gain." To produce this

tance, it becomes necessary to inquire into the best method of promoting and conducting it. The duty is difficult on account of the absence of those various helps which assist us in the performance of many others. Where there is nothing to arrest the outward attention, it requires a much greater effort of the mind to make spiritual things appear truly forcible and impressive. The natural senses, far from assisting us in contemplating heavenly realities, serve only to draw us away, and to make us wander from the great objects of attention. Even in the most heavenly-minded Christian, the wing that is spread towards heaven soon begins to flag: how much more, therefore, in the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced! Yet there is no just reason why even *these* should not derive something of the benefit attached to the duty under consideration; and with a view to effect so desirable an end a few instructions may not be unimportant.

1. If, then, we would desire our meditations to be conducive to our spiritual welfare, they should be regular and frequent. As the body is not supported and kept in vigour by an occasional repast, but by daily nourishment, so the soul also requires a stated and frequent supply of holy meditation to keep it alive and active in Divine concerns. The time and mode of our religious contemplations must indeed differ according to our opportunities of serious leisure, and the ability which God may give us for this employment: but even in the youngest, the most illiterate and the most engaged members of society, there is no adequate excuse for omitting the duty altogether. If we do not meditate, we cannot pray aright; a wider distance will be interposed between God and us; the Holy Spirit will be grieved, and our spirituality of mind will be greatly lessened, if not entirely lost. Our conversation and intercourse with the world cannot partake of the

true spirit of the Gospel, if we do not value and cherish that spirit in our moments of retirement. We should therefore avail ourselves of every favourable season for this delightful and profitable work. But more especially should we engage in it, when the mind is more than usually drawn towards heavenly objects, when the heart is softened by distress, and when we feel most our need of a Divine Saviour, and a celestial Comforter. Upon a sick bed those often learn to meditate upon eternal concerns, who never thought of them before; but the desire of the true Christian is, in the days of *health* and *strength*, to live "the life of faith," and to walk daily with his God, in order that when affliction arises he may know whither to resort, and may find his heavenly Parent a God "nigh at hand, and not afar off," a "very present help in time of trouble."

2. To make our meditations profitable, we should pray and strive to be enabled to conduct them with holy and devout affections. The heart needs much purification to render it fit for heavenly contemplations: it requires to be emptied of the world, and of all objects that would pollute it by their presence. There should be a solemnity when we think upon heavenly things similar to that which we should feel when an angel from heaven, or rather, were the great Judge himself to visit us, and enter into converse with us respecting our everlasting welfare. We too often lose the benefits of sacred reflection by a levity of spirit which prevents our adequately feeling the importance of the subjects in which we are engaged. Yet what can be more interesting and awful than death and judgment, heaven and hell? And what more worthy of engrossing our secret thoughts and leading us to such reflections as may be the means, by God's blessing, of our eternal salvation?

3. With a view still further to render our meditation profitable, we



should cultivate all the powers of the spiritual understanding, and all the graces of the renewed heart. Here there is ample and infinite scope. Whatever faith receives, meditation should lay hold of, and bring into powerful action. No devout feeling, no heavenly affection, no symptom of life towards God, or of deadness to the world, should be suffered to languish and decay. Every thing should be brought nigh, and appear in all its real importance. It does not require enlarged powers of mind, but a regenerate heart, to enable us to enter into this duty; and perhaps no person more enjoys the blessings connected with it than the poor and unlearned Christian, whose hopes are exclusively in heaven, and to whom no subject is so congenial as that of the infinite grace of God unfolded in his revealed word. This remark appears necessary to obviate the objection, that meditation and self-communion are duties that apply only, or chiefly, to the higher orders of intellect, and are of too refined and abstracted a nature for the youthful or uneducated Christian.

In affliction especially, sacred contemplation is a happy privilege, which we may all enjoy. Let us then, at such times, commune with ourselves, and inquire, "*Why* art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?" Let us ascertain the cause; let us trace the evil to its source, and thus gain that self-acquaintance which such an investigation, when humbly conducted, cannot fail to produce. Let us learn our sin, our infirmity, our guilt; feel more deeply our obligations to our Redeemer; cleave to him more firmly; mixing with our meditations devout prayer, which may give them a heavenly direction, and render them conducive to our happiness and spiritual advancement.

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effect we should earnestly use every assistance: we should join prayer, and reading, and Christian intercourse with our meditation; we should think upon the character and employments of the blessed inhabitants of heaven; we should contrast eternal things with the vain pursuits and unsatisfactory enjoyments of earth; we should raise as high as possible our estimate of the value of the human soul, and the price paid for its redemption; we should contemplate in all its terrors that "blackness of darkness," that everlasting destruction which awaits the impenitent sinner, in order that we may duly appreciate that mercy which provided an all-sufficient Ransom, and bought us with the invaluable price of the Redeemer's blood.

From this subject we may derive the brief but important inference, of the awful condition of him who lives

"without God in the world." If God be not in our meditations here, we have no scriptural reason to expect he will be our portion hereafter. The love of heaven and heavenly thoughts must commence upon earth; for dying in an unrenewed and unholy state, there is no reason whatever to hope that our meditation of God will be any thing but an awful sense of his presence as our offended Judge, and a tormenting remorse at having neglected to turn to him while the means of salvation were in our power. The happy contrast to this awful scene can neither be imagined nor described; for "sweet" indeed, and infinitely blessed, will be the eternal contemplations of him who has known God upon earth, and to whom heaven itself is but the consummation of those holy pleasures which even in the present world he had begun to value and enjoy.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

A FRIEND, with whom I was lately conversing, remarked, that it seemed rather singular, that, apparently, so little regard was given, either in the pulpit or in religious publications, to a discrimination or classification in any degree corresponding with the varieties of moral character that are every where to be found. Whether the remark be altogether just, and whether, if it be just, it deserves any discussion in the *Christian Observer*, I shall leave others to determine. I wish only to say so much on the subject as may give others an opportunity of investigating it more at large.

All serious and judicious persons will admit, that one of the most useful and proper studies of mankind is man; and it is evident that we can become intimately acquainted with man, only by obtaining familiarity,

as far as possible, with all the different moral aspects under which he appears. General positions and comprehensive views may be just and pleasing; but in order to the beneficial study of mankind, we must descend to minute particulars and to the examination of separate characters; as, in order to become acquainted with the productions of nature, we must carefully explore the species and the individual.

This statement being admitted, we may proceed to inquire whether such a view of the subject is sufficiently maintained and acted upon by those who undertake to instruct the world on the most serious and important subjects.

General truth, I allow, is displayed in great abundance; an ample repast is provided, and laid out in decent order: but I fear that com-



paratively little attention is devoted to give each guest that which shall be most conducive to his spiritual health and welfare. It should, however, be considered that men are moral invalids : when therefore they come into the temple of wisdom, to sit down at her table, they should neither be sent away without a supply of aliment, nor be fed with that which is unfit for them, both of which evils naturally arise from that want of discrimination to which I allude.

But to be a little more specific in my remarks ; may I not ask, without being unreasonable, why those who are living regardless of religion, are generally addressed, both in books and sermons, under no other appellation than the vague term of sinners ? Such a term is very easily used, and when properly understood, includes, I allow, the whole idea intended to be conveyed : but would it not be useful frequently to devote a few sentences to the delineation of real characters, rather than to generalize in that vague kind of declamation which most men are eager to repel, and which none are very ready to admit, as applicable to themselves.

There is a class of persons who are totally indifferent about religion ; who care but little whether they attend public worship or not ; who are utterly regardless about what they hear ;—but they may be tolerably moral in their lives, and may therefore see no propriety in including themselves under the general term “sinners.”

There is a class of people who, to the utter supineness and indifference of the former, add a vile and abandoned profligacy of character. They are the slaves of overt sin. To them drunkenness, swearing, sabbath-breaking, and similar vices are a mere sport.

There is a class of persons who are very careful to attend public worship, because they think it their

duty, if not really meritorious, to do so. They care but little about scriptural truth. Their lives, though they may be defiled with many occasional offences, are adorned also with many moral virtues.

There is a class of persons, much resembling the former, whose morals are correct and their characters amiable : but they are strangers to the peculiar truths of religion. Not guilty of gross sins, and only enjoying the amusements and society of persons who are like themselves, they cannot suppose that any thing is wrong in their case. They are negative characters ; they are without the palpable transgressions that mark the notorious offender, and they are without the palpable goodness that marks the character of the truly pious. Their great misfortune is, that they labour under a deplorable deficiency of several things necessary to constitute a true Christian.

There is one class of philosophers (for so they wish themselves in this wise age to be accounted,) who admit religion in all its orthodoxy ; who allow the Fall of Man, the Atonement, and the necessity of Renovation ; but admission is all. We may add to this class another, which is composed of those ephemeral sages who reject revelation, and adore, if indeed they adore at all, the god of the poet, of the metaphysician, and of the philosopher.

There is a class among the great and opulent, who suppose that Christianity is designed, almost wholly, for the poor and ignorant. They think it a mark of condescension in them to attend upon its ordinances : this, however, they submit to for the benefit of society ; but they expect to be treated by their Creator as exempt characters.

There is a class composed of those persons who are conscious that they are not what they ought to be. They

see that religion is excellent. They flatter themselves that they shall be wise and good at a future day.— They are procrastinators.

There is a class composed of persons who in a certain manner understand and respond to all that they hear or read: but they labour under a sort of practical inability to regard as they ought, what they still know and feel to be true and important. Thus they continue to live carelessly, and in a manner inconsistent with their better judgment, and their correct but feeble inclinations.

There is a class of persons who respect religion, promote its interests, and put to shame many real Christians, by the unequivocal excellence of their moral conduct; but who yet afford many undeniable proofs that they are destitute of that truly spiritual knowledge and holy principle which are necessary to constitute us Christians at heart.

So much may suffice at present, on the varieties of character that are very easily to be discovered among those who are living without religion. Perhaps I ought here to bring forward that interesting body of persons who are really thinking about their spiritual welfare; but, having not yet arrived at any thing that deserves the name of fixed and settled piety, might easily be divided into a variety of classes. It would be very interesting to contemplate those moral noviciates in all their preliminary stages. We should see, alternately, the wavering and the firmness of the human heart; the animation of hope, and the trepidations of fear; the wise reaping in joy the recompense of wisdom, and the inconsistent reaping in shame and regret the punishment of inconsistency. We should discover those who are quick to learn, bold to determine, decided in abandoning the world with all its pomps and vanities; and those who are dull, and slow, and hesitating, and reluctant,

and who quietly renounce one folly after another. Here we shall find the rash, the vehement, the inconsiderate, the enthusiastic, the uncharitable; and here also we shall find the timid, the cautious, the sober, and the gentle. Here are the fitful and the uniform; those who rapidly advance towards spiritual maturity, and those who make scarcely any apparent progress. But as I am attempting merely to throw out a few hints, I shall proceed no further with this part of the subject.

Again; I shall not stop to inquire whether there be greater variety in the characters of those who do not, or of those who do, regard religion. I am inclined to think that the variety in each division is far greater than is generally supposed. Let us take a few illustrations:—

Of sound genuine Christians, those sterling and dignified characters who both understand and adorn their profession, it is not my design to speak. Their views are scriptural: their lives are holy; and though they have their errors and imperfections, yet in the general tenour of their conduct, they are walking with God. It is to be lamented that this class is composed of a comparatively small number. They who rightly blend together truth, principle, and practice; who are wise without being cold, alive to divine things, without being morbid; and zealous, without being heedless and intemperate; are, it is to be feared, too few in any congregation.

There is a class of persons who have religion and passion, grace and nature, so mingled in their constitution, that they are a mystery to themselves, and to all around them. Their moral character is composed of a chaotic mixture of heterogeneous elements. They live amidst fluctuation and perplexity.

There is a class of persons who go far in religious truth, according to their favourite system. Ortho-



doxy is every thing with them;—but they forget the charity, humility, meekness, patience, submission, as also many active duties, of the real Christian.

There is a class of persons who have felt more or less of religious impressions from their earliest years;—but who have often fallen into grievous sins, whose corruptions are yet strong and too often victorious, and who cannot settle in that consistent course of piety, without which a feeling conscience can never be properly at peace.

There is a class of persons who are religious, but who do not separate themselves from the world so widely as becomes their character.

There is a class of persons who, after long familiarity with divine things, find themselves in a sort of solemn darkness. They read, and hear, and pray: but they are not happy and alive in religion as they would wish to be.

There is a class of persons who receive many right tenets in religion, but who retain also many errors, and in whose apprehensions much defect respecting the cardinal points of the Gospel is very perceptible. Their life is correct: but yet they do not exhibit many of the peculiar excellences of the Christian character.

Why should I mention the lukewarm, the stationary, the garrulous, the worldly, the indulgent, the latitudinarian, the feeble Christian? These are populous classes in all the walks of rational existence. Where, I might also ask, shall I put the class of persons who, descended from pious parents, or favoured with a religious education, know, esteem, and do something like profess religion? Who condemn folly, and love the folly they condemn: who value religion, and neglect the thing they value.

But I fear these remarks are becoming too prolix: it is time to bring

them to a close. To a man of reflection and intelligence the world continually appears a mysterious and perplexing scene. A common observer may suppose that all is known at once, and that every thing may be said in a few sweeping sentences. But a wise man sees around him an exhaustless variety; different moral elements united in all possible combinations. Hence he learns to think, and feel, and speak respecting man, with deliberation and modesty, and, pitying the rashness of those whose judgment cannot keep pace with their zeal, sees the propriety of leaving much to the Judge of all men, who alone can discern the heart.

My ideas of actually existing characters may, perhaps, startle some, and appear strange to others: but I would ask the wisest, if I wished to make him feel his ignorance, How much do we know of the world? I am of opinion that all real characters ought to be openly described with fidelity, skill, and judgment. The mere disciple of a system may attend to such a subject with impatience: but we must take the world as it is, and men as they are; and if we mean to do good, we must not merely sit down with the feelings of self-congratulation on our own proud eminence, even though it should be gilded with the light of truth; but must humbly descend into the vale among the rude and low-thoughted myriads of mankind; we must patiently and firmly hold the mirror to every individual, and must say with gentleness and affection, "Mortal, behold thyself." Uniformity in religion is most truly desirable. Our labours ought to be directed to the promotion of the "unity of the faith:" and surely this can never be done better than by making men see themselves; that, instructed in what they ought to be, they may be earnest in seeking to correct their errors and supply their defects.

The difficulty that attends the task to which this paper relates, is unquestionable: and it may be admitted, that in unskilful hands much evil might ensue from an inadequate or wrong attempt at its performance. In fact, no one who is not deeply conversant with three important volumes—the Bible, the human heart, and the world—can ever hope to acquit himself in any respect, as a sound and able teacher of mankind, in moral and religious truth. I leave it however, to persons of wisdom and experience to reflect on the subject as they judge proper. I only give it as a private opinion, that if statements of sacred truth were made with greater reference to real characters, the interests of true religion would be considerably promoted. The paragraphs of the preacher, and the pages of the author would be so many pictures in which different individuals would recognise their own peculiar features, and, consequently, instruction would make and leave such powerful and lasting impressions on the mind, as might lead to the most beneficial results.

PENSATOR.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

Detrahere et pellem, nitidus quâ quisque  
per ora

Cederet, intorsum torpida. Hor.

THE British Critic for July, 1816, (Art. 10,) contains the following passage:—

“This is the only true mode of propagating the Gospel; namely, by establishing a church and a clergy, as a rallying point of sound and active union. All the *visionary schemes of fanaticism*—all the wild and discordant efforts of *unauthorized missions*—can be productive of little permanent good. The Missionary Societies, with which this kingdom at present so unfortunately abounds, build their hopes upon sand: theirs is a foundation, which the winds and waves will soon dissipate, and the

edifice will fall upon the head of its deluded builders.”

Now in considering that the British Critic professes to be a Christian and a Church-of-England work, I would inquire, and I do it with unfeigned sorrow, whether a real, earnest, and ardent love of God breathes in such sentiments; or whether pride and bigotry do not pervade and deform the whole passage? It cannot fail to strike the most inattentive reader, that *all* the Missionary Societies established in this kingdom are the object of this writer's scorn and derision. His censures are levelled with such intemperate zeal, that friends and foes are equally involved in one universal clause of ban and anathema, and are loaded indiscriminately with the opprobrium of promoting “*visionary schemes of fanaticism*.” No exception is made in favour of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, much less in favour of the Church Missionary Society. All are alike condemned as incapable of producing permanent good. It is frequently difficult to realise in practice that which is excellent in theory: it is sometimes impossible to control all the contingent events which are requisite for carrying ingenious speculations into successful execution; but that, which has been already accomplished, it is senseless to controvert. It may be undervalued; it may be distorted by misrepresentation; it may be made the object of scorn for a season; but facts are too stubborn to bend to the wishes of those who dislike them, or to lose their effect upon the mind of a candid inquirer by passing through the medium of bigotry and prejudice. If the British Critic will not condescend to read the Reports of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, or, reading, is disposed to reproach the Society with pursuing “*visionary schemes of fanaticism*,” it is scarcely to be expected that the Reports of the Church



Missionary Society will be viewed with less jealousy and distrust. On the contrary, as the latter devote the *whole* of their funds to these visionary schemes, which Bishop Horne (good easy man) would have called the laudable promotion of the extension of Messiah's kingdom,—may the very fulfilment of the gracious purposes of His exaltation, (see Com. on Ps. xlvii. 8,) it is probable that they will only incur from the British Critic a heavier condemnation.

But this sagacious writer will, doubtless, say, that I mis-state his opinions; or, at any rate, misapprehend his meaning. What! the British Critic offended with the diffusion of the blessings of Christianity? Monstrous supposition! Is there no difference betwixt opposing the diffusion of Christianity, and ridiculing the mode in which it is attempted? Now to say nothing of the indecency of ridiculing the deliberate and long practised plans of Missionary Societies, will the British Critic have the goodness to point out what there is of delusion and fanaticism in the following statements?

"In foreign parts, the Society has for many years, and at very great expense, sent out, supported, and aided Missionaries to preach the Gospel to Europeans and Natives in the East Indies: and it has from time to time contributed largely towards the translating and printing of the Scriptures and other books in several Eastern languages; and also to the establishment and encouragement of charity schools, and the erection of churches in that quarter of the world.....To the assistance derived from this Society by its regular transmission of money, printing paper, presses, and other requisite materials, it has likewise been in a great degree owing, that the Missionaries have been enabled at different times to translate and publish several editions of the whole, or parts, of the holy

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Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, Psalter, and many books and tracts connected with religion and civilization in the Tamulian, Bengalee, and Portuguese languages."—See Report of Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, 1816.

"The Church Missionary Society has established schools and other institutions for the diffusion of religious knowledge at eleven different stations in Africa, and at nine stations in India. In some places, translations of the Scriptures have been effected with considerable labour and expense, and printing presses have been established for the general dispersion of the Gospel in many different languages. Upwards of one thousand native children are receiving the benefits of Christian education in the East, and a number greatly exceeding six hundred in Western Africa. The whole expenditure of the Society in the promotion of these objects, amounts annually to the sum of 17,000*l*. At one settlement (that of Kiskey Town,) Government contributes to the support of the Mission. At another, the Bishop of Calcutta has borne testimony to the 'happy combination of zeal and judgment' exercised in the cause of Missions by Mr. Corrie, Chaplain to the East India Company at Agra." (Bishop of Calcutta's Primary Charge.)—See Report of Church Missionary Society, 1816.

"We envy not (Quarterly Review, November, 1816, Art. III.) the feelings of those who find amusement in holding up to ridicule the labours of the Baptist Missionaries: ours, we confess, have received a very different impression, which tells us we shall not err greatly in placing the names of Marshman, Carey, Ward, and the rest of the Serampore missionaries among the benefactors of the human race....The sum expended by them annually in the three departments of missionary stations, translations, and schools, amounts

to about 14,000*l.* sterling. From this sum, in the year 1813, were supported fifty-three Missionaries of various nations, with their families; nineteen translations of Scripture were carried on, six thousand volumes printed, with nearly twenty thousand volumes of Gospels, and twenty-five thousand smaller books; and above one thousand children of various nations were instructed in useful knowledge."

"It is said that the distribution of the Scriptures, and of religious tracts, in the vernacular tongue, has had the effect of exciting a lively interest in the knowledge of the Gospel; and that of late many instances have occurred of conversion, by means of these translations alone, without the intervention of any Missionary: that many Brahmins, and others, of high cast, have recently been baptized, and that a great number of native preachers have met with the greatest success in various parts of India..... 'And yet (says Dr. Carey) we are sneeringly told that these Missionaries make only *rice Christians* in India.'"—See Quarterly Review, November, 1816.

I profess myself utterly at a loss to comprehend why such methods of diffusing the blessings of Christianity are to be branded as "visionary schemes of fanaticism," as "wild and discordant efforts of unauthorized missions," because, forsooth, what the British Critic calls the only true "rallying point of sound and active union" is wanting.

I would beg leave to suggest to the readers and admirers of the British Critic the following questions:—

Does the nation *generally* feel the importance and necessity of establishing "a church and a clergy" in every part of the world where such an establishment is required?

And, if it does, is the country enabled to carry such an extended measure into effect?

And if all that is desirable cannot

be accomplished, is that a sound reason for attempting nothing?

I readily allow that the *best* way to propagate the Gospel would be to establish "a church and a clergy" as "a rallying point of sound and active union;" but the British Critic knows, or ought to know, that such a measure, considered as a general plan, is not easy of attainment. We are, therefore, compelled to adopt the *next best* method of proceeding, which he is pleased to call "fanaticism." Fanaticism indeed! Every real and genuine endeavour to regulate our lives, and to try our actions by the Gospel-standard, is now-a-days branded with the appellation of enthusiasm or hypocrisy; and all attempts to promote, *by the only practicable means*, the extension of Christianity is called fanaticism.

As a great maritime and commercial people, we have the opportunity of diffusing the blessings of the Gospel beyond the ability of any other nation in Europe: and as masters of a large portion of India, we have not only the opportunity, but (as experience proves) the *power* of extending those blessings to millions. Do we then want the inclination, or do we undervalue the gift? Or, because it is utterly impracticable to accomplish this event in the mode prescribed by the British Critic, are we to abandon the fruits of our present success, and to begin the work afresh at some distant and undefinable period of time?

It has been sensibly remarked, that, whilst we *nominally* prize the doctrines of our religion; whilst "we talk for them, write for them, squabble, fight, hate, and calumniate our fellow-creatures for their sake," we are too often so far from making them the foundation of our practice, that we adopt a rule of conduct directly at variance with them; I mean the current maxims of the world; forgetting that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." I am afraid that some such feeling is



at the root of our enmity to missions and missionaries. In the Scriptures, "we are never suffered (says Bishop Horne) to forget, that the end of Messiah's exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, was the conversion and salvation of the world; so continually do the Prophets and Apostles delight to dwell upon that most interesting topic, the conversion of the 'nations' to the Gospel of Christ. Why do we vainly imagine that we belong to Him, unless his spirit *reign* in our hearts by faith?" (Commentary on Psalms, p. 280.)—When shall we learn to soften, rather than foment, "the unhappy disputes of the present day; disputes, which serve only to irritate the minds of the contending parties, to grieve all moderate men, and to delight the advocates for schism and infidelity?"

PAULINUS.

For the Christian Observer.

#### ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE LITERATURE OF FICTION.

AN impression of the importance of my subject, deepened by farther consideration, and by the hope and prospect of its more extended investigation in your journal by other correspondents, persuades me to tender for insertion, a second paper on the Expediency of Novel-reading, the prevalent influence of fashionable literature, and a few collateral topics.

In renewing the discussion, and reverting to the state of the religious world, as depressed and secularized, when compared with itself in an earlier day, I would, in the first place, remark, that not a few thinking persons, who watch the signs of the times, are startled by the very circumstance of the expediency of novel-reading being, at the present period, regarded as *an open question*. It is argued, that a verdict has long ago been obtained against the de-

fendants in the cause, by the general decision of the Christian public; and that to move, at this late period of time, for a new trial, either supposes the judges to have been since corrupted; or, that the defeated parties have transferred the matter to another and more *liberal* court, where they calculate upon a definitive reversion of judgment.

It is, however, my own suspicion, that the court which originally decided, and which still retains a positive opinion on the general demerit of the writers interested in the decision, does yet incline to view them now with far more lenity than formerly; and, it must be conceded, that this decrease of severity is so far justifiable, as the offenders have corrected the tone of their compositions. If the individual who now records this concession, were allowed to appear as counsel for the plaintiffs, he would act, as he presumes, the Attorney General would act under parallel circumstances. To illustrate this, let us suppose that officer to be addressing a jury in a prosecution implicating the circulation of seditious writings. We might imagine him, among other allegations, to say;—"It is true, gentlemen, that the accused party is not formally charged with high treason; nor even with having achieved the seditious depravity of the Paines of a former crisis, or of the Cobbetts who have more recently degraded the political stage. The law has nevertheless been violated; and, although no statutes can provide penalties exactly corresponding with the varied shades of human guilt; yet, the object of the law is practically obtained, in a case like the present, when its decisions tend to the subversion of the principle of disaffection; when the infliction of its penalties restrains an offender from future deviations; and so menaces his associates as to awe them into silence, and furnish them with a beneficial opportunity

of discovering what must have been the ruinous consequences to themselves of their own projects. In the instance of the party immediately arraigned, whatever be the modification of his offence, it is sufficient that its origin is politically corrupt, that in its nature there inheres a tendency to increase with dark and malignant rapidity, and that its ultimate uncontrolled result must be a revolutionary explosion. It is, therefore, falsely kind to shelter the defendant under the refinements of an adulterated candour, by urging, as I anticipate, will be advanced on the other side, that the prisoner has merely indulged a little innocuous, though liberal speculation in political science;—for, gentlemen, we must revert to the *principle* of this pamphlet, mark not merely its phrases, but its practical bearings; and a verdict must be founded on the consideration that the very principle which breathes through its pages (even supposing them to contain no paragraph directly of a seditious character, and formally constituting a libel,) is essentially hostile to the monarchy and established constitution of this empire.”——Is there any difficulty, sir, in applying this method to the example of Novels? We are not to estimate by weight and measure the respective quantities of mischief in certain given books, by way of ascertaining, with the accuracy of Shylock, *how much* mischief may safely be circulated, (which, by the way, is a very comic solecism,) but must make the honest and Christian inquiry, Has this performance the fair impress of innocence and utility?

And, after all, what is the tangible amelioration, so frequently pleaded, of the more modern novel? This inquiry should be very seriously answered before the alleged improvement is made a plea for their perusal. In a cursory review of a few of the standard British novelists,——passing by Fielding, Smollett, and

Sterne, as registered in the *index expurgatorius* even of accommodating moralists, and to be found, I presume, in no decent family,—let us pause at the name of Goldsmith. Of the Vicar of Wakefield, it is sufficient to observe, that from its details of obsolete manners, deficiency of sentiment, and general homeliness, it is least likely to injure those who are least likely to read it; I mean young persons, and especially young women of delicate romantic super sensitive minds; who certainly will never descend into the dull profound of *The Primeiros* while they can soar with *Mathilde*. In fact, sir, *these* are the readers to whom an indulgence in novels is a draught of moral hemlock. One has no trembling solicitude for students of either sex, whose souls are insusceptible of impassioned emotion.—In passing on to the guarded name of Richardson, you will allow me to transfer some degree of the severity which will, I suppose, be imputed to me by his protectors, to the author of the following enlightened criticism. “Vice (for vice is necessary to be shewn) should always disgust; nor should the graces of gayety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems; for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will seldom be heartily abhorred.” If these observations, by Johnson, be just, and they appear unanswerable, Richardson’s *Lovelace*, for example, is a character which ought never to have been drawn. In the graces of gayety and the dignity of courage, in liberality without profusion, in perseverance and address, he every where appears the first of men; and that honour with which he protects the virtue of his *Rosbud*, if any instruction is to be drawn from it, can only lead the admirers of



Richardson to believe, that another *Clarissa* might be perfectly safe, were she to throw herself upon the honour of another *Lovelace*. Yet in the composition of this splendid character there is not one principle upon which confidence can securely rest; and *Lovelace*, while he is admired by the youth of both sexes, and escapes the contempt of mankind at large, must excite in the breast of a Christian moralist, sentiments of abhorrence and detestation. A French critic, speaking of this character, says, "By turns I could embrace and fight with *Lovelace*. His pride, his gayety, his drollery, charm and amuse me; his genius confounds and makes me smile; his wickedness astonishes and enrages me; but at the same time I admire as much as I detest him." Surely this is not the character which ought to be presented to the inexperienced and ardent mind.\*—Yet Richardson, in sooth, is the writer "who taught the passions to move at the command of virtue!"

The numerous productions of *Charlotte Smith* are generally characterised (as far as dim remembrance enables me to describe them,) by an honourable sense of what the world usually understands by propriety. Combined with this they contain a fair average amount of passion, adventure, heroism, and heroineism, mixed up, in her earlier performances, with democracy; and decorated with taste, talent, and a competent knowledge of living manners. *Mrs. Radcliff's* romances far surpass all works of her school, in brilliancy, in commanding vigour of genius, in delicacy and depth of feeling, and in the varied beauties of an original, splendid, and inexhaustible imagination. Indeed, the writings of this authoress form a class of their own. To adopt the exclamation of a for-

mer writer in your pages, "What a pencil is hers! with power to adorn all that is elegant, and darken all that is awful!"—and, let me add, to fascinate beyond all names of fascination, any young mind, too ignorant of life's serious realities, and, pursuing and pursued, by the magic illusions of romance. Yet, with all the dangerous charms of this unrivalled artist, nothing is combined of a nature properly immoral; unless the enchantment diffused over her works, tends to enfeeble and subdue the soul, and by such deliquescence to demoralize it;—and this it surely does, if it impel the main currents of passion towards points from which all the discipline of domestic instruction, and the influence of domestic example, is, in a thousand instances, vainly employed to divert them.

It may be a hopeless attempt to restrain our sons at the great schools and universities, from touching either the best or worst among established works of fiction; as every schoolboy and gowdman may command any thing with money, and may read trash of every description, without the inspection of father or tutor. But where sons and daughters (particularly the latter) remain under the tutelary supervision of parents, it is at least possible for the heads of the family to proscribe, within their "visible, diurnal sphere," exceptionable books. In thus referring to the exercise of domestic authority, it is of high consequence to inquire, by what anomaly in the prevalent system of education and general economy of families, Christian mothers can passively allow their daughters to range at will among the degenerate literature of the times. The sterling value of the national character, as it shines in private and home life, and as opposed to the habits of obtrusion and display of the continental fashionables, will be perpetuated (if

\* The above criticism appears in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Art. *Novel*. The context may be read with advantage.

\* *Christian Observer* for 1809, p. 115.

perpetuated at all) in a most controlling degree, by the *women* of this island; and specifically by those who, in an age splendid in female intellect, and generally favourable to its farther development, give colour to the literature of their country. I trust that as yet, the native good sense, simplicity, frankness, delicacy, and innocence of British females, has lost none of its lustre, though exposed to the corroding action of continental manners. What may hereafter be lost by repeated and daring exposure to the French atmosphere, I cannot calculate. I am conscious that the hardest and most polished gem may be rendered opaque, and even crushed or consumed; and without suggesting a more direct analogy, I own myself to be too deeply interested in the preservation and yet higher elevation of the character already possessed by my countrywomen, not to be aware that in proportion as novels, compiled on either side of the water, constitute the favourite reading of the daughters of Britain, in that proportion the dignity and purity of those makers of our manners and happiness will sink into the elegant degradation of the goddesses of Paris. There still exists a broad interval between the characters of the rival countries. A complete nationality exhibits itself both in their virtues and their crimes. Among ourselves, goodness is more real with less pretension; and vice does not habitually embarrass itself to be mistaken for innocence. In France, it is precisely the reverse. It is a soil fruitful in Lovelaces; admired on their surface, and detested when examined.

The influence of our indigenous novels is exasperated by a circumstance yet to be mentioned; namely, that we have not only prose but metrical performances of this kind. Walter Scott led the way in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; a poem which was received and ordered to

be laid upon the table, *nem. diss.* by the literary legislature of the empire; and speedily domesticated in the majority of the strictest private circles. *Hoc fonte derivata clades!* A long procession of romances in rhyme followed. They were bought, read, idolized; but were beginning to wane at the approaches of criticism and satiety, when the meteor-star of Lord Byron arose in the horizon; and in the progress of its swift and radiant ascent quickly diverted, astonished, and fixed the public attention. It was not, however, foreseen by the governors of religious families, that when, but twelve years since, they sanctioned the circulation of *The Lay*, the entrance of the domestic library was opened for the admission of its compeers, successors, and imitators, with a large retinue of the fashionable authors of modern literature.\* It was not foreseen, among a thousand collateral consequences, that even the musical collections of their daughters would be decorated by such compilations as have since found admission. This is a tangible illustration of the moral lassitude and too secularized state of the Christian world. At the same time, how unconscious of the evil veiled beneath its decorated surface are those young persons—not indeed in all instances—whose voice and speech are suffered to add to their master's compositions a new and living potency!

If novels, which are indebted to no extrinsic sources of fascination for their effect, are, as I have endeavoured to prove, highly baneful to the rising generation, how greatly

\* I may be accused of inaccurate chronology in assigning the above date, as the period when the *first* inundation of indiscriminate reading diffused itself over the stricter order of families. It might be more correct to say, that the waters had been gradually rising for many previous years, and gained their flood-height about the time specified in my remarks.



so must be the kind of poetry to which I allude, when thus accompanied with music, and every other circumstance that can give it access to the youthful heart! The more I reflect upon the subject, the more deeply I become convinced that the whole system of reading, now under discussion, is indefensible on any manly

or Christian grounds; and that, if persisted in for many years longer, it will tend, more than any thing else, to break down that barrier which ought to separate the recreations of a religious family from those of the unthinking world.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Sermons on various Subjects and Occasions.* By GEORGE STANLEY FABER, B. D. Rector of Long-Newton. Vol. I. London: Rivingtons. pp. xvi. and 484. 1816.

THE name of Mr. Faber is well known to the public, as that of a distinguished scholar and an eminent divine. Whether his researches have always been of a kind best calculated to enlighten the world, and to do justice to himself, may perhaps admit of a question: and for ourselves we confess, that we are never so happy to meet him as in the walks of Christian theology. The ability and learning which he has displayed in elucidating many dark and intricate subjects, cannot, at any rate, be misemployed in the illustration and enforcement of those great truths which are more immediately connected with his profession: and although we had not been favoured with his *Treatise on the Holy Spirit*, we should still have anticipated much both of instruction and improvement from such a dedication of his time and labours. The volume of sermons, of which we propose now to give some account, is evidently the production of no common mind. It comprises many subjects of high importance; and they are handled, in general, with such a Christian spirit, with such force of argument, and such correctness of language and of taste, that

few persons, we presume, who are competent to follow the reasoning, will take up the work without giving it an entire perusal. These sermons are not, in the usual sense of the words, either *practical* or *popular*: we are inclined to place them in the same class with Bishop Horsley's. They are addressed to men of thought and reflection: and we have seldom met with discourses better suited to convince the reasoning gainsayer, and to confirm the intelligent believer in his most holy faith. In the following pages we shall confine ourselves chiefly to the humble but useful task of affording a brief view of Mr. Faber's manner and line of argument in the prosecution of his several subjects.

The first sermon is on the universal Profitableness of Scripture: and its object is to shew in what way the Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. This discourse is, perhaps, better adapted than any other in the volume to an ordinary congregation: it was delivered as a collation sermon at Stockton upon Tees; and the preacher very properly takes occasion in it to state both the doctrines and the practice which he should feel himself bound in conscience to inculcate. In discussing the subject of *doctrine*, Mr. Faber shews briefly from the

Articles, which he had that day read before the congregation, the truths which are taught in Scripture, and which are peculiarly profitable for man in his present state: such as original sin; salvation by faith; the necessity of Divine grace, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have it; justification through the merits of Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; holiness of life; adoption into the family of God; and the readiness of the Father of Mercies to give his Spirit to them that ask him.

After explaining, in the next place, how the Scripture is profitable for reproof by its warnings and denunciations, and shewing how incumbent it is upon the minister of Christ not to handle the word of God deceitfully, or to cry Peace, when there is no peace, he proceeds to illustrate the term *correction*. By this word, in conformity with the Greek, he understands the *setting us right in our opinions*, whether those opinions respect principles or practice.

"Without the Bible, all our sentiments of God and religion are radically false: it is the office of Scripture to correct those sentiments. And, even with the Bible in our hands, it is astonishing what erroneous opinions are frequently entertained with regard both to doctrine and practice: it is the office of Scripture to correct all such mistakes." p. 15.

He takes, as instances, the following particulars. Some have maintained that because we are dead in trespasses and sins, and have no power to help ourselves, it is vain for us to attempt to repent and turn to God. Others have gone into the opposite error, and have argued, that because Scripture commands us to perform such and such duties, we are of course able to perform them in our own strength. Others have become Antinomians, and have madly decried all good works as mere servile legality, because the Bible teaches us, that we are justified solely by grace

through faith, and not for our own works and deservings. In all these respects, Mr. Faber shews the excellence of the Scriptures as profitable for correction; and proves that such errors could not prevail, if men were willing to take the word of God in plainness and simplicity.

The manner in which the Scripture instructs us in righteousness requires, as our author justly observes, many sermons for a full discussion. He is contented in this discourse with a general view of it; and refers his hearers to the opening of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, and to St. Paul's account, in the fifth chapter to the Galatians, of the works of the flesh, and the fruits of the Spirit;—the first delineating the character of the true Israelite; the second proving further what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. The Sermon concludes with a brief but impressive address to the congregation to pray for themselves, and for those also who watch for their souls; that hereafter they may be their pastor's joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming.

The title of the second sermon is, "God's Justice exemplified in the Atonement of Christ;" the text Rom. iii. 23—26.

The perfect justice of God is here stated to be the very basis of Christianity: and upon the existence of this attribute is built the whole of St. Paul's argument in his Epistle to the Romans. Mr. Faber reasons upon the subject in the following manner:—

Any exertion of justice presupposes the existence of some known law or standard of right or wrong, to which actions may be referred. If the actions come not within the cognizance of the law, the man is innocent: if they be of a contrary description, he is guilty, and punishment must follow. He may not have broken every enactment: but



his partial innocence will not excuse his partial transgression. If he be suffered to escape after breaking the law in *one* point, that permission is an act of injustice. In the exercise of human laws, it is necessary to vest somewhere the power of granting an absolute pardon. But, however necessary, the use of this power is a departure from strict justice. In human institutions, perfect justice and perfect mercy cannot subsist together. Mercy, as exercised by men, is only an inferior sort of injustice. In some such way as this, St. Paul appears to have reasoned. He assumes as the ground-work of his argument, that God must, from the very perfection of his nature, be absolutely and immutably just. He next shews, that all men have violated a known law; and thence concludes, that by the law none can be justified.

The first of these positions needs no discussion.

To prove the second, the general violation of the law, the Apostle refers both to the Gentile and the Jew. The Gentiles, probably retaining some recollection of primitive patriarchal revelation, were liable, even in a state of nature as contra-distinguished from a state of subjection to a written law, to account for their transgression of that will of God with which they *were* acquainted. He shews, that although their knowledge of God's will was very imperfect, if compared with that of the Jews, still they never acted conformably to that degree of light which they really possessed. They were guilty of actions which they knew at the time to be offensive to their Creator. "Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." They were therefore guilty on their own principles.

Few arguments are necessary to prove the violation of the written Christ. Observ. No. 126.

moral law on the part of the Jews: even if no instance of external positive transgression could be adduced, yet when we reflect upon the purity of the Divine law, and consider that it reaches the very thoughts and intents of the heart, that it takes cognizance of every rebellious speculation and every unhallowed wish, the conclusion must be, that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin.

Hence the third position is evident, that by the law none can be justified: if it were otherwise, God would cease to be perfectly just. The strange notion that in the day of judgment a sort of balance will be struck between a man's good deeds and his bad ones, is as contrary to the usage of human tribunals as to the holy Scriptures. The justice of God is as much concerned to inflict punishment on all mankind, as the justice of our courts of law is concerned to inflict punishment on a convicted offender. "Cursed is *every one* that continueth not in *ALL* things, which are written in the book of the law to do them."

How then are we to be delivered from this curse? The plan of the Deist, who rejects Divine Revelation, and of the Socinian, who receives it so far only as it suits his inclination, is partly to extenuate the guilt of man, and partly to call in the unqualified mercy of God.—But this plan does not solve the difficulty. The question is not, *to what extent* we have offended, but whether we have been disobedient *at all*. The sentence of God is against every man who has violated the law in any one particular; and with respect to the alleged unqualified mercy of God, it is in this view utterly indefensible; since it takes away the attribute of perfect justice. The Deity of the Socinian is necessarily an *unjust*, and therefore an *imperfect* being.

Very different is the doctrine of Scripture.

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"The remarkable passage before us contains the sum and substance of the whole matter. As a point already proved by him in the preceding part of his Epistle, St. Paul first sets forth, as an undeniable principle, that 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' He next declares that, notwithstanding our violation of the Divine law, we are yet 'justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.' He then proceeds to describe *how* we are redeemed by Christ: 'God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' And he lastly intimates, that this was done in order that the justice of God might be preserved absolutely perfect and entire, even at the very time when he was extending pardon to those whose condemnation that justice loudly demanded: 'to declare his righteousness (or, for the public demonstration of his justice) in the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; I say, for the public demonstration of his justice at this time: that so he might be just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'

"It must, I think, strike every one, however singular it may appear at the first view, that God's remission of sins is not here described as an act of *mercy*, but as an act of strict and unbending *justice*. His remission of them, contradictory as such a thing might seem, is yet a public demonstration of his *justice*. The Apostle, in order, as it were, that his meaning might be incapable of misapprehension, emphatically repeats his words; and, instead of disguising the point, or refusing to meet the difficulty, he sums up the whole in what may well be termed 'the great legal paradox of Christianity,' by declaring, that God accepted the atonement made by the blood of Christ, in order that *he might at once be just himself, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*; nay, that by virtue of this powerful atonement, the remission of sins should absolutely be a demonstration of his *justice*;—not of his *mercy* (as the Socinian would teach us,) but of his *justice*." pp. 41—43.

An objection is frequently made, that the substitution of the innocent for the guilty is itself an act of injustice. To this it is satisfactorily replied, that such a substitution would doubtless be unjust, if *constrained*: but not so, when it is *voluntary* on the part of the substitute. Something more, however,

is necessary to constitute an *adequate* substitute. There must not only be the *will*, but the *right* and the *power*: and it is not easy to conceive how these three requisites can meet in any *created* being.

This subject is discussed by Mr. Faber with his usual acuteness; and his reasoning leads to the conclusion that the person whose atonement is of such efficacy as to exhibit God perfectly just, even in the very act of justifying sinners, must himself be God; since it does not appear that any inferior being can possess the qualifications of *the will, the right, and the power*.

"Accordingly, both the inherent right and the full power, which last completes the character of a sufficient substitute, are expressly claimed for our Lord. 'Therefore doth my Father love me,' saith he, 'because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.' So likewise 'He is able,' saith his Apostle, 'to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an High-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.'

"In this manner, and in this only, can the problem be solved, that sinful man should escape the penalty due to his sins, and that God should still retain inviolate his attribute of perfect justice.

"In Christ Jesus alone, very God and very man, are the apparently jarring attributes of justice and mercy reconciled together. Through the atonement made by his precious blood-shedding, we may now with a firm though humble confidence look up to God as being at once just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." pp. 49, 50.

The text of the third sermon is Rom. viii. 33, 34. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth:



who is he that condemneth?" The subject is the doctrine of justification by faith.

This doctrine, Mr. Faber observes, may claim to itself a sort of pre-eminence over all other doctrines. Luther pronounced it to be the criterion of a standing or falling church, accordingly as it was held soundly or unsoundly: and respecting those who departed from the scriptural view of this great doctrine, it was declared by St. Paul that *Christ should profit them nothing*, and that to them the Gospel was *become of no effect*.

The theological sense of the words *justify* and *justification*, or the sense in which St. Paul uses them to describe the mode and ground of our acceptance with God, may be gathered very definitely from the text. The phraseology of the passage is *forensic*. The elect of God are put upon their trial: charges of various sorts are pleaded against them: yet however aggravated, and however true the charges, who shall presume to condemn, since it is God that justifieth? Here *justification* is opposed to *condemnation*; and therefore its theological sense must be *acquittal*. But since the charges are true, the persons accused cannot be acquitted as *innocent*: justification, therefore, is a complex idea: it involves the notion of *pardon* as well as of *acquittal*. In this sense we accordingly find it used, Rom. iii. 23—25. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

But how can it be reconciled with the Divine attribute of justice, that the allowedly guilty shall not only be pardoned, but acquitted? This apparent contradiction can be solved

only by a right view of the doctrine of *justification*. The Apostle was aware of the question, and therefore immediately subjoins, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Now we can be justified before a just God only by righteousness of some sort: by our own righteousness, or the righteousness of some other person. By our own righteousness, as we have already seen, we cannot be justified: we must therefore be justified by some external righteousness; and that righteousness is the righteousness of our Saviour Christ, apprehended by faith, and imputed to us by the grace of God; so that at the bar of heaven it is reckoned as our own, and pleaded by our great Advocate, to use Mr. Faber's expression, "in arrest of judgment." Hence Christ is said to be made righteousness unto us: hence also this righteousness is said to be by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe. Faith is the instrument by which we apprehend the righteousness of Christ; and we are therefore said to be justified by faith, which is the same thing as our being justified by grace through faith.

"On these authorities, our church rightly determines, that 'we are accounted righteous before God (*accounted* only, not actually made righteous,) only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.' And, on the same authorities, she further decides respecting works done before justification, that they are not pleasing to God. But, if works done before justification be not pleasing unto God; then no works of ours can, in any shape, be the procuring cause of justification: for, if we can do no good works until we be first justified, and if even the good works done after our justification, and in consequence of it, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of

God's judgment, then our justification must necessarily be wholly independent of our works.

"Thus, so far as the cause meritorious of our justification is concerned, we arrive at the conclusion, that we are justified solely by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, his all-perfect righteousness being imputed unto us and thence in the court of heaven accounted as our righteousness.

"Zealous as we ought to be of good works in their proper place, here, in the article of justification, we must altogether renounce them. We must reckon them as altogether nothing. We must not presume, in the slightest degree, to build upon them. We must not imagine that they can purchase heaven for us. We must not dare to plead them in arrest of judgment. Before God our only suit must be, that we are sinners, that Christ is righteous; that he was imputatively made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might imputatively be made the righteousness of God in him." pp. 64—65

The Homily of Salvation, as cited in this sermon, holds precisely the same language.

In a preceding part of the discourse, Mr. Faber had noticed the gross errors of the Romish Church relative to the justification of mankind; and he proceeds, toward the close, to meet certain objections which have been raised against the scriptural doctrine on this subject. Of these the two principal are, that it relaxes the bonds of morality, and that St. James speaks in terms very different from those of St. Paul. With respect to the former of these objections, it was anticipated by the Apostle himself, and he guards expressly against it. This circumstance, therefore, tends strongly to prove that the doctrine of the Romanists, and of those generally who expect to be justified by their works, cannot be the doctrine of St. Paul; because, if it were, then his repelling argument, (Rom. vi. 1, 2,) "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" would be altogether irrelevant and absurd; for no such abuse could take place. Indeed, upon the charge itself, we may observe that,

however plausible, it is utterly unfounded: the sound doctrine of justification assigns to good works their proper rank; and wherever it is duly received into the heart, it will be followed by the fruits of holiness.

On the apparent discrepancy between St. Paul and St. James; one of whom asserts, that *a man is justified by faith without works*,—and the other, that *a man is justified by works, and not by faith only*; Mr. Faber remarks, that of the three terms, *justification, faith, and works*, contained in these passages, the former two are adopted in different senses by the two Apostles. *St. Paul*, speaking of justification in its strictly theological sense of pardon and acquittal, declares, that the instrumental cause of it is a lively faith in Christ. This doctrine, however, having been misunderstood or perverted by the Antinomian teachers, *St. James* asserts, that the faith which justifies is not a mere speculative belief, such as the devils have; and using the word faith in the sense in which those whom he is opposing practically adopt it, (i. e. in the sense of a bare historical belief,) he thence teaches that a man is not justified by faith only.

But he declares also, that a man is justified by works. Hence, as St. Paul used the word justification in the abstract, St. James doubtless uses it in a more extended sense, as involving the idea of its consequent effects in sanctification. Thus, though the righteousness of abstract justification is imputative, and not personal, the righteousness of sanctification, which is the consequent of justification, becomes, by being freely imparted to us from the Holy Spirit, personally inherent, and not imputative. There is therefore no contradiction in the statements.

This doctrine of justification by faith only, is pronounced by the Church of England to be "a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." Mr. Faber employs a few pages in shewing the truth of



that assertion; and closes his very excellent sermon by contemplating with the ardent feelings of one who is admitted to share in their pilgrimage and their triumphs, the progress of those real Christians, who have received that wholesome doctrine into their hearts, and are cheered by its blessed consolations.

"Thus, rejoicing in hope, full of comfort, abounding in good works, anticipating the glories of the inheritance reserved for them, do the redeemed of the Lord advance on their way heavenward. Renouncing all trust in their own righteousness, they 'have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' Soon therefore, in the full enjoyment of the beatific vision of God, shall they cast, with the apocalyptic elders, their crowns before the throne, and take up the triumphant song, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;' therefore 'blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'" pp. 86, 87.

Our author takes for the subject of his next discourse the Doctrine of Sanctification; and he grounds it upon the text, "Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

He commences the discussion of this doctrine by stating the moral corruption of mankind, and shewing, from analogy, that the mental qualifications of the human race may be expected to correspond with those of our primogenitors. The lion and the lamb, under whatever circumstances they may be trained to maturity, retain still the characteristic qualities of their kind: the resemblance is not merely in the external form, but in the internal temper and disposition. Adam and Eve, therefore, having experienced moral depravation before the birth of their children, the whole analogy of nature would teach us to believe, that the same depravation must be found in their descendants. The corruption of human nature consists not in the following a bad example; for, to

recur to the above allusion, the lamb would not, by associating with lions, adopt their manners; but the evil is innate and inherent in our very constitution.

We are not, however, left to establish the doctrine by analogy or inference: the Scriptures distinctly assert it; and in terms which are totally inconsistent with the Pelagian idea of our depravity arising only from imitation. From the Fall man suffered in two respects: by his deflection from righteousness he lost all *title* to the kingdom of heaven on the score of God's *justice*; and by his contraction of impurity he lost every *qualification* on the score of God's *holiness*. Now for both these defects Christianity supplies a remedy: by the sacrifice of Christ, and through his meritoriousness, the sinner may be *justified*; and by the changing and renewing of our hearts through the influence of the Holy Spirit, we are rendered, at least in some humble measure, meet for spiritual happiness; that is, are sanctified. Without justification, we should be excluded by the *righteousness* of God; without sanctification, by his *holiness*.

In prosecuting the inquiry suggested by the text, Mr. Faber considers, in the first place, the nature of Christian holiness; and secondly, establishes the truth of the declaration, that without it no man shall see the Lord.

Under the former head, he shews that the process of our sanctification is an inversion of the process of our fall. The enlightened intellect, the obedient will, the holy affections, which were possessed by our first parents, and which, by their transgression, were lost, are to be recovered and restored. In the effecting this salutary change the Holy Spirit of God is the grand agent: he illuminates the understanding, and by means of this chiefly, as a proper instrument and a secondary cause, he rectifies the will and purifies the affections. The change, thus pro-

duced, is internal and spiritual; and its reality is exhibited in the outward conduct.

Now it is evident that this sanctification cannot exist without a commencement: in a revolution so complete there must be some *turning point* from evil to good, some precise *time* in which each individual begins to experience this holy change. Such a commencement is always supposed in the Scriptures: and it is mentioned by its own appropriate name, *conversion*. It is described by our Lord under the term *regeneration*; a term admirably adapted in itself to point out the beginning of a new life; and from the circumstance of its being familiar to the Gentiles in the celebration of their mysteries, well suited to form the phrasology of a religion which was eventually to be extended throughout the Pagan world. This regeneration, therefore, is the implantation of a holy principle: our further advancement in the divine life is called sanctification; which, in this world, is always progressive, but never perfect: it begins on earth, but it will not be consummated till we arrive at heaven.

The second point of discussion is the Apostle's declaration, that without it no man shall see the Lord; and our author endeavours to shew that this scriptural decision is founded also on the immutable principles of right reason.

This argument Mr. Faber pursues, by proving that God cannot consistently with his attributes admit the unholy into his presence; and that an intimate association with God would be incapable of producing any felicity in the souls of those who are destitute of what the Apostle calls *the meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light*. An unholy being would not be happy in heaven, if it were possible for him to abide there: he must experience a radical change before he can be qualified for the kingdom of God. The sermon con-

cludes with some judicious exhortations tending to enforce the advice of the text.

The title of the next four discourses is, *the Doctrine of Regeneration according to Scripture and the Church of England*.

The text is from Rom. ii. 28, 29. *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter: whose praise is not of men but of God.*

The commencement of our sanctification, as we have already seen, is not coeval with our natural life; for we are born by nature the children of wrath. This commencement is styled by our Lord, regeneration, or a new-birth: and as the conversion from darkness to light, which is implied in the term, is a matter of the highest importance, our Saviour has represented it scenically before our eyes, by the rite of baptism. Baptism is the symbol, and regeneration the thing signified. The question, therefore, arises, *Does the inward grace of regeneration ALWAYS accompany the outward sign of baptism: or, on the contrary, is it possible that either may subsist WITHOUT the other?*

Those who hold the former of these opinions, contend, of course, that baptism and spiritual regeneration are *inseparable*; that all baptized persons are regenerate, and that all the unbaptized are unregenerate. The assertion, be it observed, respects not merely an *abstract opinion*, but a *fact*: and as such, it ought to be established by positive evidence. Mr. Faber undertakes to shew in this sermon, that the inseparability of baptism and regeneration cannot be reconciled with either actual experience, right reason, or analogy.

1. How far is the alleged matter of fact supported in all cases by actual experience? We cannot question an infant, to give us an account of the



great change which, by this theory, he is supposed to undergo: and, therefore, whatever we may think of the *improbability* of the hypothesis, we cannot *prove* it to be erroneous, by referring to experience. But we have also an office for *adult* baptism: and if regeneration *always* accompanies the rite, the following argument of Mr. Faber will not be incorrect.

"It is asserted, that the spiritual change of heart called Regeneration invariably takes place in the precise article of baptism. If this assertion therefore be well founded, the spiritual change in question will invariably take place in every adult at the identical moment when he is baptized. That is to say, at the very instant when the hand of the priest brings his body in contact with baptismal water; at that precise instant, his understanding begins to be illuminated, his will to be reformed, and his affections to be purified. Hitherto he has walked in darkness; but now, to use the scriptural phrase, he has passed from darkness into light. Hitherto he has been wrapped in a death-like sleep of trespasses and sins; but now he awakes and rises from the dead, Christ himself giving him life. Hitherto he has been a chaos of vice and ignorance and spiritual confusion; the natural man receiving not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: but now he is created after God in righteousness and true holiness: being in Christ, he is a new creature: having become spiritual, the things of the Spirit of God are no longer foolishness unto him; he knows them, because they are spiritually discerned. Such are the emphatic terms in which regeneration is described by the sacred writers: what we have to do therefore, I apprehend, is forthwith to inquire, whether every baptized adult, without a single exception, is invariably found to declare, that, in the precise article of baptism, his soul experienced a change analogous to that which is so unequivocally set forth in the above-cited texts of Scripture." pp. 145, 146.

If regeneration take place, at any other period of life, there may be nothing very distinct to render it perceptible *at first*: but if it take place in the article of baptism, it occurs *expectedly*; the catechumen has been prepared by his teacher to

look for it at that period. He becomes by regeneration, according to the language of our Church, *nothing like the man that he was before*: and this change, as being previously expected, must be sensibly perceived, by every baptized adult. And is it possible that he can ever forget it; or that he can mistake this radical conversion of the heart, for a transient good resolution? If *one* exception can be produced, then regeneration does not *always* accompany baptism, and the doctrine is untrue.

II. Will this opinion stand the test of right reason?

If a man *without holiness* cannot see the Lord, then it is, at least, *implied*, that *with holiness* he *will* see the Lord. Suppose then that regeneration, the commencing point of holiness, is always communicated at baptism; baptism then must always place the person baptized in a state of salvation: so that every baptized person, who dies immediately after the administration of the rite, is infallibly sure of entering into the kingdom of heaven. Hence it follows, that every prudent parent will carefully refrain from having his child baptized in its infancy; and that every adult, converted from Paganism to Christianity would do well to put off his baptism to the last extremity. We know that in truth this was the great corruption of the fourth century. The Emperor Constantine was not received by baptism into the number of the faithful till a few days before his death; and "it was the custom with many," says Mosheim, "in that century, to put off their baptism to the last hour: that thus immediately after receiving by this rite the remission of their sins, they might ascend pure and spotless to the mansions of life and immortality." We have in this passage the fact and the reason of it. It emanated from the very theory now under consideration.

The same doctrine would further authorize the persuasion, that a Pagan who should be baptized at the point of death, although wholly unconscious of the nature of the rite, and ignorant of the name of Christ, or perhaps an apostate from that name, would certainly be saved. If baptism be inseparable from regeneration, the conclusion is inevitable.\*

And since by this supposed theory, all unbaptized persons are unregenerate, not one of them can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Thus, not only every individual, Jew, Pagan, and Mahometan, whether young or old, is at once consigned to perdition; but also the unbaptized children of Christian parents, and in general all Quakers and also Anti-pædobaptists, who have not as yet considered themselves qualified for the sacrament. Neither does the argument stop here. For what shall we say of the Patriarchs and the Prophets? None of them were baptized, except latterly, according to the mere *human* institution of Jewish baptism; and therefore none were regenerated, and none can be saved. The principle is universal; and it condemns David, and Samuel, and Isaiah, and and many others of whom the world was not worthy, by one general and inevitable sentence.

In reply to this remark, some, perhaps, will contend, since circumcision under the Old dispensation, corresponds with baptism under the New, that all the circumcised were actually regenerated by virtue of the ancient rite. But if this conclusion

\* We are perfectly aware, as our readers will perceive a few pages further on, that since Mr. Faber's work was published, the *absolute inseparability* of baptism from regeneration, at least in the case of adults, has been generally disclaimed; yet as long as the decisive language of Dr. Mant, and other writers of the same school, stands on record, we cannot think these arguments superfluous or misplaced.

be valid, it was superfluous to baptize circumcised persons: they could not be twice regenerated: and yet were the circumcised converts of our Lord baptized; and according to his general injunction to baptize all proselytes, without distinction, the Apostles admitted to the Christian rite, the Jew as well as the Gentile.

But even if we allow for one moment, that circumcision invariably bestowed regeneration under the law, in the same manner as baptism, according to the theory which we are examining, imparts it under the Gospel, the inseparability of the sign of the thing signified would still include in one general condemnation, all the persons who flourished before the establishment of circumcision as a divine and positive ordinance. Noah might, in some inexplicable sense, have been a just man, and perfect in his generation; and Abel might, in a way equally inexplicable, be called righteous by Christ himself; but they were neither baptized nor circumcised. Shall we, therefore, conclude, that they were not regenerated, and therefore could not be admitted into the kingdom of heaven?

Still further—In the primitive church, during a period of dreadful persecution, it frequently happened that a devout catechumen was dragged to the stake, and put to death, before he had partaken of the rite of baptism: and there are cases of Pagans being suddenly converted to Christianity, by observing the constancy of the martyrs, and being themselves immediately led to the slaughter. Were these persons saved or not? They never were baptized, and therefore, according to the creed of inseparability, never regenerated.\* The ancients, who

\* Again we would state, that some important concessions have been made on this part, likewise, of the subject.



maintained in a corrupt period of the church, the invariable union of baptism and regeneration, contrived a fiction of their own, in order to escape from the difficulty : they could not but admit that these martyrs were saved, and they held, therefore, that they were baptized. With what? The element of water.—No: with their own blood:—that they were regenerated in the very act of martyrdom. If this ingenious but unscriptural notion preserve the theory in words, it is nevertheless, in fact, a total abandonment of the principle.

III. There is yet the argument of analogy : and although this argument is only presumptive, it tends strongly to establish the view of those who consider the spiritual change as not necessarily confined to the rite of baptism.

We acknowledge two sacraments; each of them having its own proper parts mutually corresponding : visible with visible ; invisible with invisible : both relate to something inward, signified by something outward. It seems reasonable, therefore, to infer, that if the outward visible sign be invariably accompanied by the inward spiritual grace in one instance, it is so in both. Without such a supposition the analogy is imperfect. The Romanists, therefore, most consistently maintain the inseparable union in both cases : but not so the Protestants. With whatever zeal some of them may contend for the invariable connexion of baptism and regeneration, they believe, nevertheless, that the wicked in receiving the consecrated elements do *not* spiritually partake of the body and blood of Christ. What they strongly affirm in one sacrament, they as strongly deny in the other ; and

and that several strenuous advocates for the doctrine of inseparability have confessed that it applies only or chiefly to ordinary circumstances, and the usual application of the Divine grace, but by no means entirely precludes peculiar and unusual means of regeneration in exempt cases, or where baptism was unobtainable.

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thus completely violate the law of analogy.

In the sixth sermon, Mr. Faber proceeds to examine, whether the notion that *baptism and regeneration are inseparably united, can be supported by Scripture*. In this inquiry, he adduces and explains many passages which bear upon the question, and subjoins several examples. If our limits would admit of it we should have much pleasure in citing several pages of this sermon : it is truly excellent, and, in our view, conclusive with respect to the matter in debate. We recommend it to the perusal of every person, who wishes for a clear scriptural view of the subject, derived simply from the authority of Revelation ; and shall content ourselves with offering to our readers a brief summary of the argument, as given at the close of the sermon.

“II. The sum, in short, of the whole argument, may be reduced to the following syllogisms.

“1. (1.) Without regeneration it is impossible to enter into the kingdom of heaven : because regeneration is the commencing point of sanctification ; and, without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.

“ (2.) But, if it be impossible to enter into the kingdom of heaven without regeneration ; then all, who do enter into the kingdom of heaven, must have been regenerated.

“ (3.) Now the penitent malefactor on the cross certainly entered into the kingdom of heaven ; because Christ himself promised that he should.

“ (4.) Therefore the penitent malefactor must have been previously regenerated.

“ (5.) But the penitent malefactor was never baptized.

“ (6.) Therefore the penitent malefactor was regenerated without the intervention of baptism.

“ (7.) Consequently, we have a direct scriptural proof, that baptism and regeneration are not inseparable.

“ 2. (1.) If it can be shewn, that a person has been regenerated before baptism :

then baptism and regeneration are not inseparably united.

"(2.) But it has been proved, that the centurion Cornelius, the devout Lydia, the Apostle St. Paul, and the guileless Nathanael, were regenerated before baptism.

"(3.) Therefore baptism and regeneration are not inseparably united.

"3. (1) If it can be proved, that any person has received the outward visible sign of baptism, and that he did not at the same time receive the inward spiritual grace of regeneration; then baptism and regeneration are not inseparable:

"(2.) But it has been shewn, that Simon Magus was duly baptized, and yet that he still remained unregenerate."

"(3.) Therefore, finally, baptism and regeneration are not inseparable.

"III. Thus it appears from direct scriptural authority, that regeneration may subsist without baptism, and that baptism may subsist without regeneration.

"Hence it will follow, that regeneration may take place at any indefinite point of a man's life; either before baptism, or in the article of baptism, or after baptism. This great change of heart must indeed be necessarily experienced by every fallen creature, in order to his entering into the kingdom of heaven: because, without such a change, it is impossible in the very nature of things, that he could enjoy happiness in the presence of a holy God. But to assert, that regeneration is so inseparably tied to baptism, that all the baptized are regenerate, and all the unbaptized unregenerate; that regeneration therefore invariably takes place in the article of baptism, and consequently that it is nugatory to expect any spiritual regeneration after the outward rite of baptism has been duly administered: to assert such a theory as this is to advocate a mere unauthorized human speculation, which rests not on a more solid basis than the transubstantiation of the Romanists, and which is alike irreconcilable with experience, and with right reason, and with analogy, and with Scripture." pp. 213—220.

So far as the *general* interests of religion are concerned, the argument

\* This argument of Mr. Faber's will not, of course, appear strictly correct to those who think that a once regenerate man may cease to be regenerate.

might be closed with this appeal to the Scriptures: but for the satisfaction of many who profess themselves to be members of the Church of England, it is desirable to pursue the inquiry somewhat further. We hear it frequently stated, that the *doctrine of the inseparability of baptism and regeneration, whether right or wrong, is the genuine doctrine of the Anglican Church*: Mr. Faber, therefore, proceeds, in the seventh sermon, to examine the truth of this position.

The documents to be considered are, the Baptismal Service, other parts of the Liturgy, the Catechism, the Articles and the Homilies. No person, who wishes to see correctly the opinions of the church, will confine himself to a detached part of her compositions: he will view them as a whole; and upon an examination of the whole he will form his judgment.

1. With respect to the Baptismal Services; the minister prays that the infant about to be baptized may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration. After the performance of the rite, he solicits the prayers of the congregation, that the child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning, on the express ground that the child is now regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church; and lastly returns thanks to God that it hath pleased him to regenerate this infant by his holy Spirit. The office for adult baptism is marked by similar phraseology; so that whatever applies to the one, applies also to the other.

Now it is evident, that the public offices of a national church must be comprised in *general* terms: neither the framers of the Liturgy, nor the priests who use it, could speak positively of each baptized individual, adult as well as infant, whether he would or would not be regenerated in baptism: and surely the decision of this point ought not to be left to the officiating minister. Our church, therefore, in the judg-



ment and hope of charity, whilst admitting persons into the visible church by the visible sign, speaks of them also as admitted by spiritual grace into the invisible church; that is, it speaks *generally* of all the baptized as being likewise regenerated.

This is the only principle for a general service which it is possible to adopt; and it is sanctioned both by the authority of Scripture and by the ordinary phraseology which is familiar to us in secular affairs.

St. Paul addresses one of his Epistles to *ALL that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints*. Another of them to *the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints*. Did he mean this language to be applied to *ALL* that were in Rome? to *every member* of the church at Corinth? And when the same general mode of speaking is addressed to the Ephesians, to the Thessalonians, and by St. Peter to the strangers of the dispersion, are we indeed to suppose that every one of them *had been quickened, was elected of God, was in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ, was begotten again to a lively hope, was born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible*? Yet this is exactly the conclusion at which we must arrive, if we apply to the language of the Apostles the same principles of interpretation by which our baptismal services are supposed to assert the regeneration in baptism of *every* person whom the church pronounces to be regenerate. If one of these conclusions be valid, the other is equally so. The rule of adopting general phraseology is and must be admitted in *public* documents.

"If," says Mr. Faber, "we were gravely to argue, that, in the undoubted judgment of the king and his ministers, there was not so much as a single disaffected person in this happy land, because its sovereign in general proclamations characterizes all his subjects, without any excep-

tion, as equally loving: if, I say, we were thus gravely to argue, whatever might be thought of the cogency of our reasoning, the principle of our argument would be the very same as the principle of that redoubted argument which has been thought irrefragably to prove that the doctrine of the inseparability of baptism and regeneration is the true doctrine of the Church of England," pp. 231, 232.

This mode of phraseology is used by the church on other occasions. Thus *every* child, without exception, is taught in the Catechism to profess his belief in *God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth him and all the elect people of God*. Is every child thus sanctified? Those that partake of the Lord's supper are all taught to unite with the congregation in expressions of the deepest humility and contrition. Is every communicant influenced by these Christian sentiments?

In the Burial of the Dead, the priest, in the name of the congregation, gives hearty thanks to God that it hath pleased him to deliver the person, over whose grave the service is recited, *from the miseries of this sinful world*, with more to the same purport. Does the Church of England imagine every person under these circumstances, to be such a gainer by his death, as to have reason to rejoice in that event? Yet if the Church really maintain the regeneration of every individual in her baptismal services, how can we avoid the inference, that she also maintains the actual salvation of every one who receives Christian burial? With the same premises, in each case we must necessarily arrive at the same conclusion.

An examination of other documents, some of which are expressly drawn up in a scholastic, precise, and definite form, will convince us that our venerable church is chargeable with no such absurdity as the theory of inseparability supposes: and if any *apparent* difference should exist between her several documents,

(for *real* difference there is none), we must plainly collect her doctrines from those writings which pretend to accuracy of definition, rather than from such as are of a more loose and popular nature. Now in these more scholastic compositions, we either find a total silence with respect to this alleged inseparability of baptism and regeneration, or a doctrine directly opposed to it: and in certain parts of the Liturgy itself are petitions framed upon the manifest hypothesis, that many adults who compose our congregations, and who were baptized in their infancy, are still unregenerate.

A proof of this assertion we find in the Collect for the Circumcision of Christ. It is a prayer of the congregation for the *true circumcision of the Spirit*, as contrasted with the circumcision of the flesh; that is, a prayer for spiritual regeneration.—This collect, we may observe, is couched in general terms: every individual is thus taught to pray for regeneration. Did the church mean to affirm that every person who belongs to her communion is unregenerate? Surely not: yet this conclusion is just as legitimate as the opposite conclusion, derived from the general nature of her baptismal services.

After some very judicious observations upon the Collect for the Nativity—a collect which was understood by Wheatly, and maintained by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, till within the last two or three years, to be a prayer for *regeneration*—Mr. Faber passes on to the Catechism, and shews that here the theory in question, instead of being asserted, is, in effect, denied. For in the general definition of the term *sacrament*, as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof, baptism and the Lord's supper are placed on the same footing

with regard to their respective signs and things signified: and since, in the Lord's supper, the sign and the thing signified are confessedly *not* inseparable, the obvious inference is, that neither are they inseparable in baptism.

The same conclusion also will follow from the Articles. We have a *general* definition (Art. XXV.) of both sacraments: it of course affirms of both the same thing, and therefore cannot allow the sign and the thing signified to be separable in the one case and inseparable in the other. We have also a *particular* definition (Art. XXVII.) of baptism *alone*, in which it is not easy to discover any assertion of the doctrine under examination. But if any individual should be of a different mind, let him consider the explanatory statement in the twenty-fifth Article. It is there asserted of *both* sacraments, "*In such ONLY as WORTHILY receive the same, they have a wholesome effect and operation: but they that receive them UNWORTHILY, purchase to themselves damnation.*" Without entering at length into the discussion of every part of this statement, this point at least must be admitted, that our church does not hold the unscriptural doctrine of spiritual regeneration being confined in all cases to the sacrament of baptism.

Mr. Faber here goes at some length into the case of baptized infants. Are they *worthy* recipients? We agree with him, that since they are by nature *children of wrath*, we certainly cannot *prove* that they receive baptism *worthily*: positive experience demonstrates that many of them were not regenerated in baptism; and this is sufficient for the question at issue.

The Sermon concludes with some extracts from the Homilies, which it seems impossible to explain on any other principle than that adopted by Mr. Faber. We should gladly follow our author in his very



able and judicious disquisition upon these passages; but must be satisfied with referring to his work.

The eighth sermon finishes the subject. It has been contended by some persons, that the doctrine of the inseparability of baptism and regeneration must be the doctrine of the Church of England; because her best and ablest divines have ever maintained it as a genuine tenet of the communion to which they belong. But is this assertion correct? *Has* the doctrine been maintained by her best and ablest divines?

Mr. Faber most truly replies in the negative: and he proves his position by extracts from their own writings, which can leave little doubt upon any candid mind with respect to the views which they really did entertain. Among the authorities cited, is first a confession of faith drawn up and signed by the following Protestant Bishops and Martyrs, while imprisoned in London:—

“Robert Ferrar, Bishop of St. David’s, and a Member of the Committee appointed to compile the Liturgy; Rowland Taylor; John Philpot; John Bradford; Laurence Saunders; John Hooper, Bishop of Worcester and Gloucester; Edward Crome; John Rogers; and Edmund Lawrence. It bears date the eighth day of May, in the year 1554; and to it is annexed the subsequent declaration: To these things aforesaid, do I, Miles Coverdale, late Bishop of Exeter, consent and agree with these mine afflicted brethren, being prisoners. Mine own hand, Miles Coverdale.”

2. A code of forty-one Articles, which, according to Bishop Burnet, *it is more than probable*, were framed by Cranmer and Ridley.

3. In addition to these authorities which comprise the sentiments of five English Bishops, who flourished at the time of the Reformation, we are presented by Mr. Faber with cor-

responding extracts from the writings of Bishop Latimer, Bishop Jewel, Dean Noel, Bishop Hall, Archbishop Usher, Richard Hooker, Bishop Reynolds, Bishop Hopkins, Bishop Pearson, Bishop Wilkins, Dr. Barrow, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Butler, Bishop Horsely, and the present excellent Bishop of Durham. Here is a body of evidence afforded by our ablest and most distinguished prelates and divines, from the Reformation even to this day, which is utterly at variance with the doctrine that has by some persons been so confidently maintained, upon the alleged authority of all our best divines. Our readers may, perhaps, be surprised to discover in this list certain names, which are occasionally brought forward, in support of the pretended inseparability of baptism and regeneration; but their surprise will cease, when they observe in what manner the allegation is borne out. It is very easy by gathered extracts to make any writer responsible for any sentiments: and thus it is that Bishop Latimer, Dean Noel, and others, have been adduced as the advocates of a creed which they as little hold as the doctrine of transubstantiation. That the notion of regeneration being inseparably united to baptism, is not entirely new, even among the members of the Church of England, is but too notorious. Bishop Hopkins complains of its appearing in his day; and he speaks upon the subject in terms which deserve the serious attention of every minister.

“Very difficult it is to persuade men against the prejudices of their corrupt hearts. This great change, say they, is more than needs. Regeneration begins now to be decried by as great masters in Israel as ever Nicodemus was. Many understand not to what end the fabric of corrupt nature should be demolished, and men as it were turned out of themselves. They think, if they are but baptized, whereby, as they suppose, the guilt of original sin is washed away, that a sober religious life,

keeping from gross actual sins, is sufficient for the obtaining of heaven, without those hard and inexplicable notions of regeneration. I shall therefore endeavour to convince you of the indispensable necessity that there is of being born again; that so, when you are persuaded of it, you may give no rest unto yourselves nor unto God, till he cause his Spirit, which is that wind that bloweth where it listeth, to breathe spiritual life into you, without which it is impossible that you should inherit eternal life."\* pp. 302, 303.

We cannot dismiss this subject without another observation. Do the persons who appeal with such confidence to all the distinguished writers of our church, as believers in the necessarily regenerating effects of baptism, recollect that many of them were avowedly Calvinists?† Is it possible that Whitgift, for example, or Usher *could* hold the doctrine without the abandonment of their peculiar creed? For in that case, since they held also the doctrine of final perseverance, they must also have maintained that every baptized person would finally enter into the kingdom of heaven. The view given by Usher of his own sentiments, as cited by Mr. Faber, must have corresponded with that of his Calvinistic brethren. His words are—

"But what say you of infants baptized that are born in the church: doth the inward grace in their baptism always attend upon the outward sign? The answer is, Surely no: the sacrament of baptism is effectual in infants, only to those and to all those who belong unto the election of grace.

\* Bishop Hopkins's Works, p. 535.

† "Her discipline," says Bishop Hurd, speaking of the Church of England, "has been approved: it has been submitted to: it has been in former times most ably and zealously defended by the highest supralapsarian Calvinists. Such was the great Usher! such was Whitgift! such were many more burning and shining lights of our church in her early days, when she shook off the papal tyranny, long since gone to the resting place of the spirits of the just."

Which thing, though we, in the judgment of charity, do judge of every particular infant; yet we have no ground to judge so of all in general; or, if we should judge so, yet it is not any judgment of certainty; we may be mistaken."\* pp. 293, 294.

We allude to the Calvinistic opinions of Usher only to shew that *as a Calvinist* he must in common with his Calvinistic brethren, have rejected the doctrine which is now imputed by some individuals to all our old divines.

In his manner of treating the whole subject, Mr. Faber, it will be observed, proceeds upon general grounds: he enters upon the examination of a doctrine, without any marked reference to the individuals by whom it is supported, and in the spirit of sober investigation. A more inoffensive course could hardly be pursued: but it must needs be that offences will come; and the Dean of Chichester is much offended.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Faber, and entitled "An Apology for the Ministers of the Church of England, who hold the doctrine of baptismal regeneration," he expresses his feelings like a person who has very serious ground of complaint. His pamphlet carries with it many marks of haste;\* and to this haste we are probably to attribute the very singular language in which the Dean has permitted himself to indulge. We are not ignorant how prone controversialists are, above all men, to forget the decencies and civilities which should especially prevail among Christian scholars: and we are disposed to make every allowance for haste and precipitation: but candour itself must have its limits; and if we do not dwell upon this subject in those terms of reprobation which it certainly deserves, it is because we are convinced that the reflections of the author himself

\* In p. 5, he speaks of *performing qualifications*. In p. 29, of *wading through an instance*, &c.



must have long since suggested all that we would say. The "Apology" was followed by a Reply from Mr. Faber; and this again by expostulatory remarks from the Dean. Mr. Faber, in his reply, had commented, not without some portion of due severity upon the temper and manner of his opponent: the Dean throws back the charge; and his "remarks" most certainly do not convey any very striking proofs of alteration or amendment. How injurious, even to the best minds, is the spirit of controversy!

The chief reason for our introducing the mention of these pamphlets is, to recommend that of Mr. Faber, as a very lucid and masterly treatise, in support of his own statements, and to notice the singular fact of the Dean's disavowal, on the part of himself and the clergy, of Dr. Mant's doctrine. In his Apology he declares, that the inseparability of baptism and regeneration is a doctrine falsely ascribed to the clergy: he is confident that no minister of our church ever did or ever could really assert it: he intimates that it is a foolish and papistical superstition: he challenges Mr. Faber, if this opinion can be collected on principles of fair interpretation, from the writings of a minister of the Church of England, to name the book of the author,—with a great deal more in the same strain. Mr. Faber, thus challenged, names the celebrated tracts of Dr. Mant, as adopted and accredited by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and which, *on account of this very principle*, had given rise to so many pamphlets, and to so much discussion. And what then does the Dean? He avers, that the doctrine of inseparability is not held by that gentleman! He considers it as a mere invention of Mr. Faber! He says that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge would not have adopted Dr. Mant's Lecture, if it

had contained the opinions which Mr. Faber ascribes to it!\*

\* All who have at heart the real interests of the church, cannot but rejoice in the explicit disavowal, by such high authority, of a doctrine, the revival of which, by Dr. Mant, and its adoption by the Society in Bartlett's Buildings, we in common with many wise and good men, contemplated with so much alarm. Were we then alarmed on slight grounds? Is it true, that in attributing the promulgation of such unwise and papistical sentiments to Dr. Mant, and the venerable society, we misrepresented both? Let the reader judge. Dr. Mant's tract, published by the Society, is still in existence, and it contains the following passages.

"Supernatural grace is conferred thereby: viz. by baptism, p. 8.

"Baptism is a new birth, by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom." From this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the Spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action." p. 9.

"If the work of regeneration is not effected by baptism, it is almost impossible for any sober man to say when and by what means it is." p. 25.

St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, "confirms an opinion presently to be insisted on, that no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world." p. 32.

"Does not the language of the Apostle warrant the conclusion that we are born anew in baptism, and in baptism exclusively?" p. 33.

"Neither 1 John iii. 9, nor any other passage of St. John, nor any other text of Scripture, appears to me to authorize the doctrine of a second, or of any other, distinct from baptismal regeneration." p. 46.

Passages to the same effect might be multiplied; but these will suffice to shew, that if Dr. Mant had really no intention of affirming the inseparability of baptism and regeneration, he was at least unhappy in the choice of his expressions; and that we were guilty of no great breach of candour or of common sense, in attributing to him and to the Society which adopted his tract, the promulgation of that heretical and mis-

This piece of intelligence must appear not a little extraordinary to many members of that institution, and to the author of the tracts: but it is no part of our business to mediate between the parties: we only wish to observe, that this doctrine of inseparability, which was supposed to have been virtually carried *by vote* in a great Society, is now, with perhaps one single exception, universally abandoned:—it is disclaimed on all sides, and we trust that it will never be revived.

To return from this digression, Mr. Faber passes on, in the next sermon, to consider the nature of baptism. His text is the commission of Christ to his disciples: (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20,) *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.*

chievous sentiment. That sentiment is now disclaimed on his behalf, and on the behalf of the Society, by the Dean of Chichester. We rejoice in the disclaimer, and are content to submit to the imputation of being so much less acute than that gentleman, as not to have penetrated as he has done into the real meaning of Dr. Mant. Indeed we are even now incapable, to our shame be it spoken, of discovering wherein we either misconceived or misrepresented Dr. Mant's meaning. And yet it is plain from the Dean's pamphlet that we must have done both. We trust, however, that Dr. Mant and the Society will adopt the only effectual means of obviating similar misconceptions and misrepresentations in future, by suppressing the tract which has occasioned them, and which, if it continue to be circulated, will infallibly occasion them again. For unless the English language should undergo some strange alterations, we do not see how the passages we have cited above can be understood in any other sense, by plain and unlettered laics, than that which we have (doubtless ignorantly) affixed to them.

By viewing this passage conjointly with the corresponding passage of St. Mark, our author arranges his observations under two general heads: the first, respecting the order of conduct which Christ presented to his Evangelists, and the place which he assigns to baptism, when beheld by the side of faith; and the second, relating to the object of this symbolical rite, and the nature of those privileges by which it is accompanied.

Under the first division of his subject he shews, that the Evangelists were to commence their labours, by preaching Christ crucified; by convincing the world that Jesus was the true Messiah, "anointed of God with a fulness of grace, and of the Spirit without measure, and sent to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world." If any person were convinced by their preaching, and desirous to receive Christ as his Saviour, they were forthwith to baptize him in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He was thus, on the presumption that he was a real convert, although hitherto very imperfectly instructed in the great mysteries of the Gospel, to be admitted formally a member of the Church of Christ. The supposed convert might perhaps be hypocritical; but if Christ did not repel the traitor Judas from baptism (and it must be presumed that Judas was baptized as well as the rest of the Apostles,) neither could his disciples repel any who came with apparent seriousness to solicit a participation in the rite. Hence many unworthy persons were admitted to baptism:—such as Ananias and Sapphira, Demas and Simon Magus, Hymeneus, and Philetus; and many became outward members of the Christian community, who derived no saving benefit from the Christian ordinance.



After the supposed convert had been initiated into the visible communion of believers, he was to be further instructed in all things which a Christian ought to know and believe, to his soul's health. The leading and essential doctrines of the Gospel were to be completely developed to him; so that any subsequent defect or apostacy could not be charged upon his ignorance either of the tenets or the precepts of Christianity.

Now it is evident, that whatever benefits might result from believing in Christ, and from submitting to him in all his offices, those benefits would not be enjoyed by the persons who did *not* believe, and who did *not* thus submit to him. Mr. Faber illustrates the point, by enlarging upon the imagined case of a sick man. If the person have no belief in the skill of his physician, he will not apply to him for a remedy. This unbelief, therefore, leads to practical consequences, which may terminate in his death: and thus the opposite principles of faith and unbelief, in reference to Christ the Physician of the soul, inevitably produce two such opposite states of mind, and two such opposite lines of conduct, that the practical believer is brought to final happiness, and the practical unbeliever to final misery. In making this declaration, our Lord points out the radical difference between faith and baptism: he shews faith to be so essential that a man cannot be saved without it: but though he commands that every believer should be baptized; yet he carefully refrains from intimating, that without *baptism* no man can be saved. His words are, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned.* The omission of the baptismal rite, if a man have real faith, and do not omit the rite from a contemptuous neglect of Christ's commandment, (a sin of which no true believer can be guilty), will not prevent his being saved.

Christ. Observ. No. 186.

Faith is *essential* to salvation: baptism is *not*, in all cases, absolutely essential.

After a few observations upon Christ's address to Nicodemus, and upon the Divine character of our Lord, as implied in the promise that he would be with his faithful disciples, even to the end of the world, Mr. Faber enters upon the second part of his subject, and inquires into the object of the symbolical rite, and into the nature of the privileges which attend it.

He considers the form of baptism to have been very ancient, and at least as old as the time of Noah; otherwise it is difficult, he imagines, to conceive that it should have been so prevalent both among Jews and Gentiles, and connected with some ideas of a mystic renovation in both, long before the coming of our Lord. This ancient rite Christ adopted; and exalting it into a sacrament, put it into the place, not of Jewish proselytish baptism, but of the divinely-ordained rite of circumcision. Circumcision, then, being in effect and substance the same as baptism, if we would ascertain the nature and privileges of the latter, we must ascertain the nature and privileges of the former.

We can do little more than state the result of Mr. Faber's scriptural and logical discussion. The conclusion at which he arrives is this; that Christian baptism may be viewed as the door of entrance into God's visible house, the church: that hence it becomes the special mark or badge of a professing Christian; and that it likewise admits us into all the privileges enjoyed by the members of the church. So that it is not only an outward badge of our Christian profession, but an efficacious mean of grace, and a pledge to assure us of its reception, if we do not voluntarily shut ourselves out from God's covenant and declare ourselves unworthy of its benefits.

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"Such a modification of the doctrine, that it is a mean and a pledge, is evidently required both by experience and common sense. So far as matter of fact is concerned, we do not find that baptism is a mean and a pledge of grace to all who receive it: nor is it agreeable either to right reason or to the general analogy of nature, that it should be so. Baptism acts not as a charm: it imposes upon no one an invincible necessity of holiness. It is a mean of God's grace, only so far as we avail ourselves of the privileges to which it entitles us: it is a pledge of our receiving it, only so far as we take those intermediate steps upon which God has suspended its communication. A brave army is a powerful mean of victory: but, if it be ill supplied and worse conducted, no victory will be obtained. The delivering of a turf may be the pledge of a large estate: but if the estate be never claimed, or if all right to it be forfeited by treason, the receiver of the turf will derive no benefit from the most regularly and authentically witnessed reception of it. Just so is it with baptism: as a precept, it is positive: as a mean and a pledge of receiving Divine grace, it is conditional. The whole analogy of nature cannot be violated to drive men to heaven, nor yet in some cabalistical manner to convey them thither. Baptism, though in a modified sense of the words both a mean and a pledge, can no more in itself secure an admission into the presence of God, than the fabulous efficacy attributed by monkish superstition to the cloak and scapulary of St. Francis. We must do our parts in the Christian covenant, just as we must plough and sow the ground with an eye to a future plentiful harvest: and, if we thus act, we shall then find, that baptism is both a mean and a pledge of grace." pp. 385—387.

As baptism is a federal admission into the church of Christ, it follows that a baptism into what is *not* the church of Christ, is no baptism at all. If a person be baptized into a society which rejects the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, he may indeed be washed with water; but the rite is just as invalid as if he were baptized into the religion of Mahomet.

The sermon concludes with a few remarks upon infant baptism, and

upon the form requisite for the efficacious administration of the rite. We shall finish our account by an extract concerning the former of these questions.

"The manifest identity of circumcision and baptism, even to say nothing of the universal practice of the church in all ages, seems abundantly to determine the question of infant baptism.

"As circumcision under the law is the avowed symbol of regeneration, and as baptism under the Gospel is likewise the avowed symbol of regeneration; circumcision and baptism are evidently two outward sacramental signs of exactly the same import. But, if they be signs of the same spiritual grace, they must to all effective purposes be mutually the same with each other: for a sign being altogether arbitrary, if it had pleased God to shadow out regeneration by a hundred different signs, all those hundred signs would still constitute but a single sacrament.

"Such then being the case, as God judged children under the law to be fully capable of entering into covenant with him by circumcision on the eighth day, man can have no right to pronounce children under the Gospel incapable of entering into covenant with him by baptism. Every argument against infant baptism, derived from the necessary want of active faith on the part of children, will be equally cogent against infant circumcision: for faith was so much the grand principle of the Law as well as of the Gospel, that the pious patriarch of the Israelites is specially decorated with the title of 'the father of the faithful.' But God has decided the question in the matter of circumcision. Therefore, circumcision being effectively the same as baptism, he has equally decided it in the matter of baptism. Hence, in every age and in every country, with the sole exception of a modern innovating sect, pædo-baptism has invariably been adopted: and hence the Church of England well determines, that 'the baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ\*.'" pp. 397—399.

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\* Art. XXVII.



We come now to the last sermon of this very interesting volume, upon a subject of discussion than which none is more difficult. The title of it is, the Predestinarian Controversy; and its general object is to shew us the necessity of bringing to the test of Scripture not only the conclusions, at which we arrive by a course of abstract reasoning, but the very premises and steps of that reasoning. To give a satisfactory analysis of this masterly sermon, would be a work of considerable length. We shall aim, therefore, at nothing more than to offer a very brief outline of the argument.

Whatever mystery there may be in any of the doctrines of the Scriptures, it may be safely affirmed, that in all points necessary to be understood and to be believed by Christian men, the propositions themselves are clear and intelligible. The Bible does indeed treat of the deep things of God; but they are set forth in *terms*, the import of which cannot be misunderstood by the meanest capacity, although the things themselves are above the comprehension of the highest. Hence we are furnished with an admirable method of determining the truth or falsehood of our pre-conceived opinions: if they be contradictory to Scripture, whatever may have been the skill with which they were deduced, and the compactness with which they were put together, they must instantly be abandoned.

Now it seems to be too much the fault of persons violently engaged on both sides of the Calvinistic Controversy, that they are unwilling to take the Bible as they find it: they assume scriptural premises, and draw conclusions of their own, which are not scriptural; and thus they are reduced to the necessity of perverting or explaining away some of the most positive declarations of the word of God.

To shew the fallacy and danger of constructing systems, and enforcing them as articles of faith, Mr. Faber supposes a violent Calvinist and a violent Arminian, each to be building up his own hypothesis by a course of reasoning, founded upon some favourite scriptural text. The Calvinist, commencing with the undoubted sovereignty of God and the miserable and helpless condition of man, advances step by step, with great apparent correctness of demonstration, to election and reprobation, to final perseverance and particular redemption.

The high Arminian sets out in the same manner, with some declaration or exhortation of Scripture; and, by a process no less fair in appearance, discovers that the final happiness or misery of men depends solely upon their own voluntary choice, and the line of conduct adopted in consequence of such choice.

That there is a fallacy *somewhere* in deducing results so directly opposed to each other cannot be doubted; and we may perhaps be inclined from the circumstance to conclude, that abstract reasoning is not, in these matters, the best mode of arriving at truth. This suspicion will be heightened, if we push each train of reasoning to its utmost limits; for, as Mr. Faber proves, we may even go on the one side to the awful length of concluding that God is effectively the author of sin, and that virtue and vice are mere names, or to be considered only as irresistible tendencies to particular objects; and on the other side of inferring that the assistance of the Holy Spirit is superfluous, and that man is his own saviour.

These are doctrines which the two parties in question will not admit; yet the reasoning seems as legitimate and correct as that which often induces them to support their acknowledged systems, and equally

flows from their own admitted premises.

The truth is, that no dependance can be placed upon this sort of reasoning, unless it be perfectly consistent with the Scripture. Hence Mr. Faber lays down the following rule:—"Admit no conclusion in any system to be valid, unless the conclusion itself, as well as the thesis from which it is deduced, be explicitly set forth in holy Scripture."

To shew the use of this canon he applies it to the two preceding chains of abstract reasoning; and proves, by an actual appeal to the Scriptures, that several propositions advanced by each party with much apparent plausibility, are directly opposed to the word of God. He thus concludes his argument:—

"We must prove all things by Scripture, and hold fast that which is good: regardless of the even opposite conclusions, which might seem by a train of abstract reasoning to be legitimately deduced from our several articles of belief. By adopting such a plan, we may forfeit the honour and glory of a proud systematic concinnity; and, what has not unfrequently been the case with our venerable mother the Church of England, in the mortal tug of theologic war, we may very possibly be deemed Calvinistic by Arminians, and Arminian by Calvinists: but, rejecting each theory as a whole, and determining to call no man master save Christ alone, we shall have the comfort of knowing, that we believe nothing but what the Bible unequivocally teaches us to believe. It may not perhaps be the most philosophical, but it is probably the wisest, opinion which we can adopt, that the truth lies somewhere between the extremes of the two rival systems of Calvin and Arminius; though I believe it to exceed the wit of man to point out the exact place where it does lie. We distinctly perceive the two extremities of the vast chain, which stretches across the whole expanse of the theological heavens; but its central links are enveloped in impenetrable clouds

and thick darkness. After all, whatever metaphysical difficulties there may be in the matter, these difficulties are no way peculiar to Christianity: they are, if I may so speak, inherent in the very nature of things themselves. As mere Deists, we should be equally perplexed, if we were determined to excogitate a compact moral system, with the jarring points of fate and free-will, divine prescience and human contingency. This was felt long before the promulgation of the Gospel: and, if men continue to dispute and to draw out fine trains of metaphysical reasoning even to the very end of the world, it requires not the gift of prophecy to foretell, that they will be just as wise at the close as they were at the commencement." pp 478, 479.

From the view which we have now attempted to give of these sermons, and as far as was convenient in the words of the author himself, it is obvious that they form a sort of regular series: the several subjects, according to the statement in the preface, are connected with each other; and the drift of the argument will be most clearly seen by reading them in the order of their collocation. To what extent the plan may be carried, Mr. Faber has not informed us: this volume is complete in itself; but as it is entitled the *first*, and as we are told that other sets of discourses have been prepared by him, with the design of publication, we may expect soon to be favoured with at least an additional volume. We can truly say, that if Mr. Faber's future efforts be equal to the present, the more frequently we meet with him as a writer of sermons, the greater will be our gratification; and we shall be glad to reserve for him a conspicuous place in our library, not for the sake of ornament alone, but to be read and considered for the correction of error, and the confirmation of Christian principle.



## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

### GREAT BRITAIN.

In the press :—A translation from the Chinese of the Sacred Edict, &c., by the Rev. W. Milne ;—Journal of a Voyage to New Zealand, in company with the Rev. Samuel Marsden ;—Observations on the Canonical Scriptures, four vols. 8vo., by Mary Cornwallis ;—an Account of the Rev. R. Morrison's Chinese Dictionary and his own, by Dr. Montucci ;—Summary of the State of Spain at the Restoration of Ferdinand VII., by Captain C. Clarke ;—Philanthropy and other Poems, by the Rev. J. Cobbin, A. M. ;—Theological Enquiry into the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Nature of Baptismal Regeneration, in five Discourses before the University of Cambridge, by the Rev. C. Benson, M. A.

Preparing for publication :—Lectures on Scripture Doctrines, by the Rev. W. B. Collyer, D. D. ;—The Bibliographical Decameron, by the Rev. T. F. Dibden ;—The first volume of the Elgin Marbles, with an Historical and Topographical Account of Athens :—A Series of Practical Lectures, on the Leading Doctrines of the Gospel : price, to Subscribers, 5s. ; by the Rev. H. C. O'Donnoghue, A. M.

There are at present in the University of Cambridge 1359 members of the Senate ; and 3275 members on the boards, being the largest number on record. The number in 1804 was but 2122 ; and in 1748 but 1500.

The general Committee of the Waterloo Subscription have come to the resolution to allow an annuity of 6*l.* to every man who lost a limb in the battle ; 10*l.* per annum to every widow ; and for children, according to age, 4*l.* per annum, till seven years old, and up to 15*l.* at fourteen.

Sir H. Davy's invaluable Safety Lamp has been introduced upon the Continent, where it has been attended with the same happy results as at home ; and some partial attempts have been even made with it for lighting mines, by means of their own gas.

Monuments of ancient splendour continue to be discovered in searching the ruins of Pompeii. An extensive public building has been found ornamented with paintings,

some of which are very valuable. The pavement is Mosaic, formed in part of small white and coloured stones, and in part of large slabs of marble of various colours. Several inscriptions have been traced, which ascertain the use of this monument : one of them indicates that the right of *luminum obstruendorum*, (a right recognised by the Roman law, and preventing in certain cases, neighbouring proprietors from having lights or prospects near the contiguous estates), had been purchased at the price of several thousand sesterces. Some valuable statues have also been discovered.

The King of Bavaria has issued an ordinance to prevent the abuses of lotteries. He states, that the circumstances of the kingdom, and the practice in other nations, do not allow of his entirely abolishing this species of gaming ; but he strictly prohibits all persons from employing any arts for inducing the public to purchase shares. The number of office-keepers is to be moderate, and the conductors respectable men : puffing advertisements, and other publications of a tendency to excite the passions of the people, are disallowed ; no Jews are to be admitted in future as collectors ; the hawking or offering for sale of tickets is to be rigorously punished ; and children are to be entirely prohibited from adventuring.

Among the improvements in the administration of justice in the island of Ceylon, the trial by jury, which was introduced into the island in 1811, is stated to have produced the happiest effects on the character of the natives. The right of sitting upon juries has not been confined to Europeans only, but is extended, without distinction, to all the natives of the country.

The heights of the principal Himálaya mountains, hitherto inaccessible to Europeans, and long supposed in India to be the most elevated in the world, have been lately measured by observation ; the mean results of which are nearly as follows :—

	Eng. Feet
Dhawalagiri, or Dhólágir	26,462
Above the sea	26,862
Yamur á atári, or Jamautri, (above the sea)	25,509
A mountain supposed to be Dhailun, (above the sea)	24,745

	<i>Eng. Feet.</i>
A mountain not named, (above the sea) - - - -	22,769
Ditto (above the valley of Népal, which is 4600 feet higher than the sea) - - - -	20,025
Above the sea - - - -	24,625
Another near it, (above the valley of Népal) - - - -	18,662
Above the sea - - - -	23,262
A third in its vicinity, (above the valley of Népal) - - - -	18,452
(Above the sea) - - - -	23,052

The Himálaya chain is visible from Patna, on the southern bank of the Ganges, as a continued well-defined line of white cliffs, extending through more than two points of the compass, at a distance of about sixty leagues, while, at an equal distance, Chimborazo, the highest of the Andes, is seen as a single point, the rest of the Cordillera being invisible. The peak of Chamalasi, near the frontiers of Thibet, is visible from various stations in Bengal, the most remote of which is not less than 232 English miles.

## LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

### THEOLOGY.

A Series of Pastoral Letters on Nonconformity, from a Dissenting Minister to a Youth in his congregation. 12mo. 3s. 6d.

Fifty-two Lectures on the Catechism of the Church of England: to which are added, three introductory Discourses on the Subject, addressed to the Inhabitants of the Parish of Hinxworth, Herts.; by the Rev. Sir Adam Gordon, Bart. M. A. 3 vols. 8vo. 17. 11s. 6d.

The Clergyman's Companion in Visiting the Sick; by W. Paley, D. D. Archdeacon of Carlisle. 12mo. 5s. 6d.

Baker's Sermons extracted from the Lectures of Bishop Porteus. 8vo. 9s.

A Farewel Sermon, preached to the Congregation of St. James's Church, Bath, on Sunday the 23d of March, 1817; by the Rev. R. Warner. 2s.

Parochial Instruction; or, Sermons delivered from the Pulpit, at different times, in the course of thirty years; by James Bean, M. A. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Practical Discourses; by the Rev. Joshua Gilpin.

A Selection of Sermons and Charges; by the late Rev. Edward Williams, D. D. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Memoirs and Remains of the late Rev. Charles Buck; containing copious Extracts from his Diary, and interesting Letters to his Friends: interspersed with various Observations, illustrative of his Character and Works; by J. Styles, D. D. 5s.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

The Traveller's Guide to France and the Netherlands; containing the various modes and expenses of travelling in those countries. 18mo. 4s.

A Catalogue of new and second-hand

Books, in all Languages and Classes, for the year 1817; by C. Brown. 2s.

A Catalogue of Books in the Arts and Sciences, Antiquities, Biography, History, Law, and Parliamentary Papers, Theology, Topography, Travels, Voyages, &c.; by A. Maxwell. 5s.

The British Plutarch; by Francis Wrangham, Esq. 6 vols. 8vo. 37. 3s.

The Annual Register for 1816. 16s.

A Geographical Sketch of the principal Mountains throughout the World; exhibiting at one view their comparative elevations, and grouped according to their respective chains; founded upon the most exact geographical and barometrical admeasurements. 2s.

The History of the British Revolution of 1688-9, recording all the Events connected with that Transaction in England, Scotland, and Ireland, down to the Capitulation of Limerick, in 1691; by George Moore, Esq. 14s.

Thoughts on the Laws relating to Salt, as they affect the Fisheries, Agriculture, and Manufactures of the Kingdom; by Samuel Parkes, F. L. S. M. R. I. Member of the Geological Society. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

A Tribute of Sympathy, addressed to Mourners; by W. Newnham, Esq. 12mo. 5s.

Remarks on the first Chapter of the Bishop of Llandaff's *Horæ Pelasgiæ*.

Observations on the West Indian Islands Medical, Political, and Miscellaneous; by John Williamson, M. D. 8vo. 17. 5s.

Observations on the Laws and Ordinances, which exist in Foreign States, relative to the Religious Concerns of their Roman Catholic Subjects; by the Rev. J. Lingard.

Letter to William Smith, Esq. Member for Norwich; by Robert Southey. 2s.

Modern Greece, a Poem. 8vo. 5s. 6d.



Letters from Mrs. Elizabeth Carter to Mrs. Montagu, between the Year 1755 and 1800, chiefly upon Literary and Moral Subjects, from the Originals in the Possession of the Rev. Montagu Pennington, M.A. her Nephew and Executor. 3 vols. 2vo. 1l. 7s.

Odin, a Poem; by Sir W. Drummond. 4to. 18s.

Phrosyne, a Grecian Tale: Alashtar, an Arabian Tale; by H. Gally Knight, Esq. 8vo. 5s. 6d.

The Speech of the Right Hon. Robert Peel, on the Catholic Question.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

On Wednesday the 7th of May, as we stated in our last Number, was held, at Free-Masons' Hall, London, the Thirteenth Anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Right Honourable the President, assisted by the Rev. D. Wilson, read a selection of passages from the Report of the past year, containing the most interesting facts which had occurred in the course of those proceedings, now become too considerable and voluminous to be recited in detail.

The issue of copies of the Scriptures, from March 31, 1816, to March 31, 1817, had been—

92,239 Bibles. | 100,782 Testaments;

making the total issued, from the commencement of the institution, to the last mentioned period,

746,666 Bibles, | 929,323 Testaments:

in all, 1,675,989 copies, exclusive of about 100,000 copies circulated at the charge of the Society, from depositories abroad; making a grand total of *one million, seven hundred and seventy-five thousand, nine hundred and ninety-four copies*, already circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Receipts of the year have been—

Subscriptions, donations, congregational collections	l.	s.	d.
	6,754	9	3

Legacies, contributions from Auxiliary Societies, &c. &c.	55,532	0	7
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Total net receipts, exclusive of sales	62,286	9	10
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For Bibles and Testaments, the greater part purchased by Bible Associations	21,954	7	6
Total	84,240	17	4

The expenditure of the year 89,230 9 9

Obligations of the Society, including orders given for Bibles and Testaments, about	35,000	0	0
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The Right Honourable the President having introduced the Report, concluded his remarks with expressing his pleasure that the venerable Bishop of Durham still continued his unabated attachment to the objects of the institution, and his regret that increasing years deprived him of the satisfaction of attending the anniversary. He also lamented the absence of the Rev. John Owen, and still more the cause that kept him from the meeting. In him, his lordship added, the Society had found a historian worthy of its excellence; and he mentioned the circumstance because the labour of literary composition, superadded to those indefatigable exertions which have so much contributed to promote the interests of the Society, had injured his health and impaired the vigour of his constitution.

A letter of apology was read from Lord Exmouth, in which his lordship remarked:—

"I have always felt a sincere interest in the success and prosperity of the Bible Society, as tending to do more good to the human race than any society I have known or heard of; and my regret not to be able to attend it, is therefore the more sincere. I shall always feel happy to assist its laudable efforts."

Mr. Wilberforce, after various prefatory observations, concluded as follows:

"My Lord, this country has been distinguished in various lines. We have been great in our victories; great in our commercial and manufacturing achievements; great in our literary and scientific attainments. But the glories of our Society, which we are now celebrating, are glories which will last for ever. And it is delightful to observe, that their merit is duly appreciated in other countries. I find, by one passage in the Report, that in Switzerland there are many who have entered on the same course, and are following in the path in which we have gone before them. This will be peculiarly gratifying to those who, like myself, feel a more than ordinary measure of cordial attachment to that land of liberty. Germany also, in which the great religious Reformation first had its rise, is prosecuting the good work of circulating the holy Scriptures with more than common ardour. Germany is imitating our example, and emulating us with a rivalry which knows nothing of base or vulgar competition. This blessed flame, which we have happily kindled on the Continent, has spread into much darker regions. We see it even infusing life and action into the immense and torpid mass of the Russian empire, and awakening Siberia herself into motion, and communicating to it a kindly warmth.

"Thus, my lord, we proceed in our blessed course, carrying along with us from country to country, a rich donative of light, and happiness, love and joy; and behold fresh prospects of peace and comfort continually opening before us. With these delightful views it is impossible not to be thankful to God for our having been engaged in such a service. It is a work which we may truly affirm is co-extensive with the earth we inhabit; and our labours may be said, in some humble measure, to resemble those of that great Being whose word we circulate, and who 'spreads undivided, operates unspent.'

"My Lord, I must not attempt, for I am unable, to express the feelings which animate me; but I cannot sit down, without stating for myself, and it is a feeling in which I doubt not every one else will participate, that I propose the printing of this Report with the more pleasure, from the kind manner in which it mentions our dear and excellent friend, whose absence we so much regret; I mean, the Rev. Mr. Owen. In that afflicting dispensation, which has prevented him from having the gratification of continuing to labour in our cause, we must, at the same time, recognise the mercy of Providence, which did not lay him by till he had gone through an almost unequalled amount of labour and service. He

laid the foundation; he was permitted to see the superstructure rise to heaven itself; and still more, he was enabled to complete the History of our achievements, in a work which, though laborious, could not, even to the compiler himself, be without gratification. For it is always gratifying to trace any great work from its outset to its consummation; to mark its gradual progress; to see the obstacles it has overcome. And this work of our friend's will hereafter, I doubt not, be justly accounted, through succeeding ages, an imperishable record of one of the most extraordinary dispensations of Providence which ever was vouchsafed to enlighten and to bless the world.

"Under this impression, it is with delight I see the Report pay this tribute of affection and gratitude to a man to whom we owe so much. When he is no longer able to come to us, we go, as it were, to him, into our sick friend's chamber, and there endeavour to pour the strains of gratitude and consolation into his ear, when that tongue, which has so often delighted us, is silent."

This motion being seconded by the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, the Bishop of Gloucester moved thanks to the President, and pointed out the duty of joy and gratitude to God, who, in the midst of unexampled difficulty and universal distress, had maintained the prosperity of the Society; inferring from this circumstance, in conjunction with the general tenor of the Report which had been read, the propriety of persevering in patient hope. Had difficulties arisen, had opposition increased in any part of their sphere of operations, had their funds in any instance appeared to lessen, or to be directed to other channels, surely they ought to derive from these little checks the right lessons of humility, and become more anxious to pursue their work in a Christian spirit, and to compensate for partial failures by more strenuous efforts, and, if possible, by greater sacrifices. With this determination to persevere should be associated the firm principle of faith and implicit dependence upon God. "Is it nothing," said his lordship, "that bigotry in one part of Christendom, and superstition in another; that Mahometan pride and Pagan idolatry have begun in various quarters to give way? Has not the hand of God been almost visibly with us for good, and his presence among us of a truth! Has the Sun of Righteousness shone so long with uninterrupted splendour, and shall an occasional cloud make us doubt his continued favour for a moment? Shall we not rather cast ourselves still more simply and unreservedly upon his long experienced protection, and



be assured that the cause of his word will find in him a rock which shall never be shaken—the Rock of Ages, against which all the force or the devices of the powers of darkness shall never prevail?” His lordship ended his remarks with a forcible and affectionate address to the members of the Society to make a spiritual and practical use of the sacred Volumes which they distributed to others; especially as the infidel, the careless, and the worldly-minded were apt to measure the value of the Society by the effect which this professed regard to the Bible produced upon the life and deportment of its adherents.

Sir Thomas Dyke Acland particularly alluded to the co-operation and sympathy of that happy land of liberty and simplicity, of loyalty and religion, which had so admirably seconded the efforts of the Society, and whose best feelings were almost identified with our own. In his progress through that country, he had frequently the happiness to hear his native land mentioned in a manner most gratifying to his national feelings, and to public spirit and generous conduct; a successful struggle in the cause of justice, and the glory of its arms, were topics which called forth continually a well-earned praise; but a praise in some countries diminished by the imputation of selfish interest, or grudgingly yielded, and mixed perhaps with somewhat of jealousy of her pre-eminence, and anxiety respecting her influence and authority. But there were two topics which, in Switzerland especially, excited unqualified admiration; first, the emancipation of Africa from the slavery of the body; and, secondly, the emancipation of the world from the darkness and ignorance of the mind. When it was said, with gratitude and praise, that England had abolished the Slave Trade, and established the Bible Society, there remained behind no petty sorrow for her acknowledged superiority, but a desire to imitate her conduct, and emulate her benevolence. The guiding spirits, and providential instruments of these two achievements, were present before the Society; and he could add, from his own experience, and he believed there were those dear to his lordship, who, at this moment, experienced the same, that the name of his lordship, as President of the Bible Society, was a passport, not through Switzerland alone, but he believed through every nation in Europe.

Christ. Observ. No. 186.

Lord Teignmouth replied: “For thirteen years it has been my pleasing office to report the progress of an institution, continually advancing in interest, respectability, and usefulness—such, by the Divine favour, has been the effect of the disinterested benevolence of its principle, the catholic spirit of its constitution, the restrictive wisdom of its regulations, and the integrity with which its concerns have been administered. The British and Foreign Bible Society is no longer an experiment: experience has decided for it more favourably than its warmest advocates ever anticipated, and has pronounced it one of the greatest blessings to the human race, that Christian charity ever devised.

“Permit me for a moment to take a slight view of that magnificent scene which it has been the means of exhibiting to the world, and which has been most amply delineated in the Report. We may behold princes and potentates, the noble, the wise, the learned, and valiant of the earth, proclaiming their homage to the word of God, and aiding and encouraging the circulation of it, by their influence and example. We may see dignitaries and pastors of every church, Christians of all confessions, cordially uniting, and contributing, according to their several means, their talents, their time, their labour, their wealth, or their pittance, to promote this beneficent work, animating and encouraging each other in the career of benevolence, themselves animated and supported by the prayers and benedictions of thousands, who have benefited by their charitable labours. If I were to name a particular instance, out of many, in which the benevolent spirit of our institution shines with particular lustre, I would advert to the affectionate intercourse which it maintains with kindred Societies all over the world, exciting emulation without envy, and provoking each other to love and good works. And may we not hope that this kind and harmonious feeling, so cordially displayed in the Correspondence and Reports of Foreign Bible Societies, may gradually extend its benign influence, softening the asperity of national jealousies, and insinuating that spirit of conciliation and good will among nations towards each other, which the whole tenor of the Gospel inculcates, and the interests of humanity require? If such should ever be the blessed result of our endeavours to promote the happiness of mankind, through the medium

of that holy Book, in which only the knowledge for obtaining it is to be found, the British and Foreign Bible Society will then have acquired a triumph more splendid, more honourable, more useful, than ever was achieved by arms; and the word of God, which has had such free course, will then indeed be glorified. But, without expatiating on this cheering hope, which all present will, I am sure, be inclined to participate, I may venture to affirm that, if it were possible to trace, in all its variety and extent, the good produced by the British and Foreign Bible Society, the result would incontestably prove, that public liberality was never more profitably directed, was never applied to better or holier uses, than to support an institution which breathes peace and good will to men, without distinction of colour or country, Christian or heathen. But so much of that good *has* appeared, that I cannot but offer my devout thanksgiving to Almighty God, who has been pleased to make me in any degree instrumental to the production of it; and if I were to name a day of my life attended with a peculiar blessing, I should fix on that in which I became a member of this institution."

W. T. Money, Esq. M. P. assured the meeting, that the services of this Society were not less appreciated in the East than at home. He had lately returned from that quarter; and among the delightful enjoyments which awaited his return to his native land, one of the most gratifying to the best feelings of his heart was to be associated with that excellent institution, whose exertions among the nations of India he had had the happiness to witness, and, as far as depended upon his humble efforts, to promote. The first great step for the spread of the Gospel on the Western side of the Indian peninsula was the establishment of a Bible Society at Bombay, which, under the zealous and well-directed patronage of Sir Evan Nepean, had amply succeeded. The natives were at first somewhat hostile to the measure; but upon its objects being clearly explained, all apprehension vanished from their minds. The character and example of the Europeans in India had been hitherto considered as the bane of Christian instruction among the natives; but he could bear testimony that the morals of every description of British residents had now greatly improved: a zeal for religion had begun very generally to prevail, accompanied with a line of conduct more in unison with our

doctrine, and better calculated to diffuse it. The change was to be attributed to the circulation of the Bible, to the ecclesiastical establishments which Dr. Buchanan recommended, to the labours of the Missionaries, and the example of some of the highest resident Authorities. He inferred from the great diversity of native dialects from Cape Comorin to the Isthmus of Suez, the necessity not only of translations, but of teaching the inhabitants our language, as the best vehicle of religious communication. The Portuguese had adopted this plan, and their language had survived their empire, and still continued to be the medium of propagating their mode of worship with a success with which we, in the zenith of our power, cannot keep pace. After a variety of useful remarks and interesting anecdotes, Mr. Money concluded with the following relation:—

"Between two and three years ago I went from Bombay into the Mahratta country, for the health of my family, and we encamped in the bosom of a beautiful grove at Lanocoly, about thirty miles from Poonah. One day, as our little girl, not three years old, was walking through the grove with her native servant, they approached an ancient and deserted Hindoo temple; the man, quitting the little child, stepped aside, and immediately paid his adorations to a stone idol, that was seated at the door of the temple. When he returned, the following dialogue took place between them:—'Saumy, what for you do that?'—'Oh Missy, that my god.'—'Your god!—Why your god a stone—your god no can see—no can hear—no can move. My God see every thing: my God make you—make me—make every thing.'

"We remained at this sequestered place for four months, and the scene I have described was frequently repeated. Saumy never failed to repair to the temple, and the child never failed to rebuke him for his idolatry. He became, notwithstanding, very much attached to her; and when he thought she was going to Europe, he said to her, 'What will poor Saumy do when Missy go England?'—Saumy no father, no mother.' She instantly replied, 'Oh Saumy, if you love my God, he will be your Father and Mother too.'

"The old man, with tears in his eyes, promised to love her God. 'Then,' said she, 'you must learn my prayers;'



and she taught him the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, and her morning and evening Hymns. One morning, when we were assembled to family worship, Saumy, of his own accord, quite unexpected, came into the room, took his turban from his head, laid it on the floor, and, kneeling down, audibly repeated after me the Lord's Prayer. From thenceforward there was a visible change in his whole conduct, particularly in his regard for truth. He became anxious to learn English, that he might read the Bible, and, in a little time, he accomplished the task."

The Rev. George Clayton remarked—"When I look at this Society, not as I behold it to-day in this crowded hall, where all is acclamation and triumph, but when I view it in the calm retirement of the study, and as I have lately done through the curtains of a sick chamber, I can truly say, I am rapt in admiration of its constitution and movements: it comes over me in those forms of grandeur and majesty, which I have really no language to describe. I look with amazement and delight at the unincumbered simplicity of its plan, for it gives the Bible, and the Bible only—at the amplitude of its range—for the field is the world; at the multitude of its agents, for these are not easily calculated—at the vastness of its resources, which exceed the most sanguine expectations—at the magnificence of its successes, for these are now emblazoned in every dialect of the earth, and quartered on the escutcheon of almost every crowned head in Christendom. But, gentlemen, it is not precisely in these views, that the institution strikes my mind most forcibly—it is the characteristic spirit which it breathes—it is the evangelical aspect which it wears—it is the moral power it exerts, which render it the wonder of the world."

Mr. Clayton then proceeded to point out, with much eloquence, the unanimity of the Society's friends, their candour and forbearance towards their opponents, and the religious disinterestedness of its agents, and concluded as follows: "Never does this Society charm me so much, as when it humbles itself and its achievements, and says, 'Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but to thy Name, be all the glory.' It was a gratifying circumstance, which is reported to have occurred at the coronation of our beloved Sovereign, (whom may God long preserve, and speedily restore!) When the youthful Monarch passed through that

ceremony, he is reported to have inquired, whether it was customary to receive the memorial of our Saviour's death with the crown upon the head; to which the officiating Archbishop replied, that there was no established law on the occasion: upon which the Sovereign immediately put off the crown, and deposited it at the foot of the altar, while he prostrated himself in a posture of profound humiliation. This is precisely what this Society has done to-day, and will continue to do, as I hope, till the latest day of its existence. Let it not be forgotten, that it was when Nebuchadnezzar swelled on the lofty turrets of that city, which he had raised as a monument of his glory, that a watcher, and an holy one from heaven, was sent to rebuke his pride, and to terminate his dominion. It was when Herod, on a set day, arrayed in gorgeous apparel, made an oration unto the people, and they cried, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man! that the angel of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten of worms, because he gave not to God the glory. And so soon as the worm of pride shall eat into the heart of this Society, so soon as this canker shall corrode that spreading tree, under whose shade the nations are reposing, so soon may we bid farewell to the prosperity of our institution. But while harmony prevails, and forbearance is exemplified, while disinterestedness reigns, and the glory of all that is accomplished is unreservedly ascribed to the King of Heaven, so long this institution will realize, what I am sure is the wish of its warmest admirers and best friends, 'Esto perpetua!'

The Hon. Sir George Grey stated the readiness and pleasure with which foreign vessels, as well as our own, received the sacred gift of the Scriptures.—He was followed by John Weyland, jun. Esq. who expressed his great attachment to the Society, as one of the wisest and noblest efforts which God ever put it in the heart of man to make for the promotion of his glory, and the good of our fellow-creatures. It was founded, he remarked, on the only solid principle of human improvement, the *moral equality* of mankind; that principle which acknowledged that the poorest man in the poorest cottage, the wildest savage in the remotest desert has a soul as valuable in the eyes of his Creator, and which should be as valuable in the eyes of those who have the power of protecting and instructing him, as the greatest monarch on his throne. "It is this feeling," re-

marked Mr. Weyland, "which soothes the mind of the philanthropist, in contemplating the *political inequalities* of the human condition, which he must necessarily admit to be an essential part of the ordination of Providence towards a fallen world. It is the principle of *moral equality* too, as it is acted on by this Society, which more than compensates to the man who is suffering under the consequences of *political inequality*, all the supposed hardships of his lot. For put the Bible into his hand, make him feel the objects we all feel, and instead of being the lowest in the scale, he is raised to the highest point of human happiness and usefulness; he becomes the member of an *aristocracy*, to which I heartily pray, that I, and those whom I love, may belong." Mr. W. having dwelt on the *principle* of the Society, felt desirous, as a country gentleman, to bear witness to its excellent *practical effects*; which he forcibly illustrated by circumstances which had occurred, within his own observation, of immoral and profligate persons becoming useful and active members of the community by means of their connection with Bible Associations. One man, in particular, had thus saved 4s. 6d. a week to his family; he was accustomed to spend weekly 5s. at a public house; but a Bible being put into his hand he came to the penny association, and subscribed his penny: in six months from that period he increased it to 6d.; and when told that it was not wished to deprive his family of the money, he gratefully acknowledged that he had gained 4s. 6d. by means of the Association, and had to thank its conductors, not only for saving his money, but for making him a better man, and giving him the enjoyment of happiness, which he never before possessed, and for which he should never be able to repay them.

(To be concluded in our next.)

#### CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

At the seventeenth anniversary of this institution, which was held May 6th, the Rev. D. Wilson preached the Annual Sermon, and forcibly pointed out from John iv. 35, 36, First, the present state of this country with respect to the means and disposition for communicating the Gospel; and secondly, the openings in the heathen world for its reception. The meeting for receiving the Report and conducting the annual business of the Society, was after-

wards held at Freemason's-hall; the right honourable Lord Gambier in the chair; attended by the Bishop of Gloucester, several of the Vice-Presidents, and other officers of the Society, a large number of clergymen, and more than 1200 other members, both ladies and gentlemen.

The Report, which was by far the most encouraging yet presented to the Society, mentioned, among other interesting circumstances, the baptism of *twenty-one* adults in one day, from among the recaptured Negroes in the Colony of Sierra Leone. The income of the Society, instead of being diminished, as might have been expected from the circumstances of the times, had increased during the last year more than 3000*l.*; amounting to nearly 20 0 0*l.* Owing to the increased demands on the Society, the expenditure had not been much less than 22,000*l.*

The principal speakers on this occasion were, the right honourable Lord Gambier; the Bishop of Gloucester; the Rev. John Paterson; the Rev. Dr. Thorp; R. H. English, Esq.; the Rev. J. Bickerseth; Charles Barclay, Esq. M. P.; the Rev. R. P. Beachcroft; the Rev. J. W. Cunningham; the Rev. D. Hughes; the Rev. D. Wilson; the Rev. E. Burn; and the Rev. Hans Hamilton. Never have we witnessed, at any public meeting, a style of eloquence more solemn, chastised, and appropriate, or a spirit more devotional and ardent, yet at the same time humble and affectionate, than on this occasion;—and indeed it is but justice to add, that in general the anniversary meetings of the various religious charitable societies have been characterized this year more than ever, by these laudable qualities—qualities which do no less credit to the correct taste and judgment of the speakers than to their piety and indifference to worldly motives. It is gratifying to observe, and it ought surely to be viewed as a mark of the Divine blessing, and an omen for good—that those human feelings which are but too apt at all times to intrude themselves even into the best of men engaged in the best of causes are seen more and more to yield to the hallowed influence of Christian principle; and that our charitable meetings are thus rendered scarcely less beneficial to those employed in conducting them, than to those for whose benefit they are convened.

The Rev. Daniel Corrie has returned to his labours in India. His presence in



England during the last two years has been highly useful to the cause of missions in the East. The information he has conveyed, and the zeal which he has excited will not be lost at home; and in India his report of what he has witnessed here will, we trust, have considerable influence upon the European residents. The Rev. Bernard Schmid, and the Rev. Deocar Schmid, two Lutheran Clergymen, brothers, have accompanied him as missionaries. They were educated at the University of Jena, and have been for some time in England, preparing for missionary labours, under this Society. Their knowledge of languages is considerable. They are accompanied by Mrs. Deocar Schmid, who from early habit and benevolence of character is well qualified to assist the Society's plans of education in India; and also by Mr. John Adlington, a native of the West Indies, whom Mr. Corrie brought with him from the East, and who has been studying for the ministry in this country, but has now returned to India, to devote to the instruction of the young the years that must elapse till he is of due age to receive holy orders.

#### NATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY.

On the 5th of June, the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church held its annual meeting at the Central School, in Baldwin's Gardens.

His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury took the chair, supported by the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of Exeter, Salisbury, St. Asaph, Carlisle, Ely, Chester, Gloucester, Oxford, and Llandaff; the Archdeacons of London, Buckingham, Northumberland, Huntingdon, and Chichester; Lords Kenyon and Radstock; Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Duncombe, Mr. Ashton Smith, Mr. G. Gipps, and a numerous and highly respectable assembly of the clergy and laity.

The Archbishop of Canterbury opened the business of the day in nearly the following words:—"I have the honour to meet you for the sixth time to receive the Annual Report of your General Committee; and I meet you with more than ordinary satisfaction, because the hopes which I ventured to express when last I filled this chair have been realized. The law-officers of the crown, by the gracious directions of his royal highness the Prince Regent, have prepared a charter, which, having received

the sanction of the great seal, has been this day accepted by your Committee, on behalf of the members at large; and the National Society now constitutes one of the great incorporated charities of the empire. I now request the Secretary to read us the Report."

The Report having been read by the Rev. T. T. Walmsley, the Secretary, his Grace thus resumed—

"I rise with great satisfaction, after hearing this Report, because it develops most clearly the progress of the national system under the care of your Committee. It appears that the number of scholars in your Central School has increased one hundred and sixty-nine; making the number now in attendance nine hundred and seventy-four, being as many as the school can conveniently hold; a decisive proof that the master and mistress have discharged their duty. The state of the Central School is a matter of the very first importance, on the ground that it is the resort from whence all other schools are to receive information.

"The training of masters, another important branch of the Committee's care, has received particular attention, and great numbers of those thus trained are now diffusing the system both in this kingdom and abroad. These exertions have not been made without incurring great expense; and it appears that the disbursements have exceeded the annual receipts by upwards of 1000*l*. This circumstance has been occasioned by many persons having withdrawn their subscriptions from the general fund, and applied them to the support of schools in their own immediate neighbourhood.—The expense of training masters in the Central School alone, during the last year, has been upwards of 500*l*.

"The extent to which the labours of the Committee have gone may be estimated, when we learn that not fewer than two hundred and thirty-three schools have been united to this Society in the course of the last year, making the whole number now united one thousand and nine.

"Your attention is farther called to the increased number of children now under instruction in the principles of the Established Church. It is estimated that the scholars now taught upon the plan and principles of our Society, of whom no official intimation has been received by the Committee,

amount to no less than forty thousand. Of these, it is probable that many are in fact united to District Committees in the country, though no regular return has yet been received from them. I am happy to say, that the scholars, of whom regular returns have been received by the Secretary, amount to one hundred and fifty-five thousand. The number of scholars now educating according to the plan and principles of our Society, cannot, therefore, be much less than two hundred thousand. When you connect this statement with the rapid succession of scholars which takes place in our schools, some idea may be formed of the good which has been done, and which is now doing, throughout the island. Nor has the benefit of our plan been confined to this kingdom only; the colonies and several foreign nations have largely participated; a reflection which to the liberal feelings of an Englishman will afford the highest gratification.

"The expenditure of our funds has proceeded nearly to their whole extent; and I trust we have not been faulty in giving an assurance, that although there is a deficiency at present, we expect a fresh spring in the bounty of our fellow-countrymen. Three thousand pounds only now remain, and this we will liberally dispense, trusting that when the public know our wants, and see our efforts, we shall not have reason to regret our liberality.

"The result of the whole appears to be, that with a sum of about 30,000*l.* upwards of a thousand schools have been united with this Society, and two hundred thousand children are enjoying the benefit of a religious education. We hope this result shews that your Committee have endeavoured to do their duty. It must not, and will not be forgotten, that putting books into the hands of this immense population, may be the means of doing infinite good, if rightly superintended; and the means of doing infinite mischief, if left loose and undirected to their proper channel."

Mr. Joshua Watson, the treasurer, stated, that the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chief Baron, the auditors of the accounts, had commissioned him to express their satisfaction at being enabled to render their services to the Society.—Various persons of distinction spoke at the meeting, and concurred in testifying the merits and the importance of the institution.

## BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Anniversary Meeting of the British and Foreign School Society was held on Tuesday, May 13th, at Freemasons' hall.

His Grace the Duke of Bedford took the chair, and was accompanied by the Marquis of Tavistock; Sir John Jackson, Bart.; Sir James Mackintosh, M. P.; Mr. Barclay, M. P.; Mr. Brougham, M. P.; his Excellency the French Ambassador; Lord Ossulston; Lord Wm. Russell; the Sulton Katteghery; Baron Strandman; Dr. Hamel; Mr. Mallett, the Secretary of the Elementary School Society at Paris; Mr. Moran; and a considerable number of Ministers from various parts of the country. His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex shortly after entered, and took a part in the proceedings.

The Report stated, that the sum of 10,000*l.* which was required to clear off some old debts, and erect a proper school-house, had, with an additional sum, been procured within the last year. Mr. Owen, of Lanark, had contributed 1000*l.* to this vested subscription. The new system had been widely spread in every quarter of the world. In the Borough of Southwark Free-Schools, 12,000 children had been educated, independently of their forming a centre, from which instructors were initiated into the system, and sent to every part of the world. A Jews' School, for the education of 400 boys, had been established in Houndsditch. Satisfactory accounts were received from Scotland and Ireland: in the latter country, the Catholic Clergy, in many instances, had lent their aid to the diffusion of education, according to the new system. Similar intelligence was received from India, where the missionaries co-operated in the undertaking. In France, according to the information conveyed by Mr. Moran (who first introduced the system into that country), a very liberal support had been given by the king, the duke de la Chartre, count Lainé, and several prefects and other functionaries. His majesty had directed that the Catholic and Protestant boys should be educated in different schools, to admit of their receiving religious instruction from their several pastors. In Russia and the North of Europe, it received every support. In Rome, no objections had been



raised against its introduction; and cardinal Gonsalvi, on the part of the pope, desired that the Society's books should be forwarded for perusal. In the kingdom of

Hayti, it had also obtained a footing; and also in Spain, Africa, America, Sierra Leone, and other places.

## VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE occurrences of the last month, both foreign and domestic, have excited more than usual interest.

The whole of the South-American Continent appears to be on the verge of the most important changes. Both in the Portuguese and Spanish dominions the successes of the popular party against the royalists have of late been very considerable. Pernambuco especially has made the most strenuous efforts to throw off the yoke, and has been joined by several of the neighbouring provinces; so that, upon the whole, there is every probability for supposing that the period is not far distant, in which South America will achieve its independence, and open new prospects of the most important kind to the hopes and energies of the European world.

The difficulties with which the royal house of Portugal have had to contend in the Brazils, have been accompanied with serious revolutionary movements in the parent state. A conspiracy for subverting

the regency, and organizing a new system of government, has been detected, and for the time apparently suppressed; but it is still evident that a large number of persons in Portugal feel unwilling to submit much longer with cordiality to a trans-atlantic government; and that the royal family will be ultimately obliged to make a decisive choice between the evils which on every side are gathering around them.

It gives us much pleasure to find, that the Congress of the United States have authorized their President to negotiate with all governments in which they have accredited agents respecting the best means of effecting an entire and immediate abolition of the Slave Trade. They also wish Great Britain to receive into the colony of Sierra Leone, free People of Colour from the United States; or, in case of this being refused, that we and other maritime powers should guaranty the permanent neutrality of a similar colony, to be established at the expense of the United States, on some other part of the African coast.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

The right honourable Manners Sutton has been appointed Speaker of the House of Commons, in the room of the late Speaker, Mr. Abbot, whose ill health has obliged him to retire from his high office, amidst the eulogies and regrets of men of every party and opinion, both in and out of the House. He has been rewarded with the title of Baron Colchester, of Colchester, and a pension of 4,000*l.* per annum for his own life, with 3,000*l.* per annum for the two lives next in succession.

The finance committee have estimated the future produce of the public income at about fifty millions: the expenditure for 1817, at 67,817,752*l.*; and of 1818, at 66,216,657*l.* As, however, each of the latter sums includes fourteen or fifteen millions to be applied for the reduction of

debt, the revenue, it is calculated, will exceed the expenditure by two or three millions per annum, even independently of the probable improvement which may be expected in the general circumstances of the country. The net revenue for the year, ending April 5, 1817, was 52,850,323*l.*

The trials of the state prisoners have occupied a considerable portion of public attention and anxiety during the last month: the particulars are doubtless known to all our readers, and need not therefore be here repeated. After a minute investigation, which lasted a whole week, and excited the most intense interest, Watson, who was first put to the bar, being found *Not Guilty*, the other prisoners were liberated without any witnesses being called. This result has, of course, produced on the

minds of the public very different impressions; but it seems on all hands to be admitted, that seditious, and indeed treasonable conspiracies, of a very decided and atrocious character, have been proved to have existed; and that however ignoble the conspirators, or ridiculous some of their projects when contrasted with the inadequacy of their powers, yet that an extensive and organized plan was actually formed for subverting the present government, and for establishing a system of the most wild and revolutionary nature. It was not the fault of the conspirators that it did not succeed: nor ought the miserable imbecility of their plot to be admitted as an extenuation of the guilt of its projectors. The principal witness for the prosecution was a man of the name of Castles, whose disreputable character, as well as his inflammatory mode of procedure in the character of a spy and secret informer, appear to have operated very much in favour of the prisoners. At all times, the evidence of persons who are themselves implicated in criminal transactions, is to be received with caution; and it certainly does appear, and is indeed expressly stated in the late Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, that instances have of late occurred of persons fomenting those conspiracies which they were authorized only to detect. Yet allowing the utmost for these palliating circumstances, the general leading fact of the existence of a bold and regular design to subvert the present system of things has been unequivocally established; and, in the opinion of Parliament, (as far as that opinion has been hitherto expressed,) the necessity for the continued suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act still remains. Indeed, under present circumstances, it certainly appears, however painful the sacrifice, to be necessary not only for the peace of the community at large, but also for the benefit of the deluded individuals of whose sufferings the leaders of revolt are glad to avail themselves, to allow Government the power of detaining notoriously factious characters. We deeply lament the necessity, but would

not, therefore, wish to see the public safety risked by denying for a short time, till the next meeting of Parliament, this important power.—The recent disturbances in the North, where tumults of a serious kind have arisen, affecting particularly the counties of Nottingham and Derby, and part of Yorkshire, are a strong argument for the further suspension. These tumults were promptly suppressed, (the more promptly on account of this very suspension,) and a large number of persons taken into custody. We rejoice, however, to find that neither these nor preceding riots have been encouraged by any persons of consideration, or even by the neighbouring farmers and tradesmen; so that we may reasonably hope, that in proportion as the fatuity of such plots and the character of the ringleaders are discovered, the misguided part of the populace, in every part of the kingdom, will return to their ancient loyalty and submission to constituted authorities. Should Providence bless us, as there appears every reason to expect, with an abundant harvest, and its consequent benefits, the discontented will lose one of their most powerful instruments of popular delusion: for great as have been the wants and privations of the poor, they have been rather the instrument and pretext employed by a few seditious individuals to stir men up against the government, than the motive cause in which such proceedings originated.

A measure proposed by the chancellor of the exchequer is now before the House of Commons, for facilitating the erection of places of worship in connection with the Established Church, in those parishes where the existing churches and episcopal chapels are insufficient for the public accommodation. The details of the measure are not yet completed; but our readers will rejoice with us that something, at least, is to be at length done on a subject of such vital importance both to the interests of the Established Church, and of Christianity at large.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. R. H. S.; A CONSTANT READER; THEOGNIS; ALBYN; N. H.; are under consideration.

T. S. H.—; and the Memoir of Lady O'B.; will obtain *early* insertion.

PHILO-CRANMER's Papers are left as he directed.